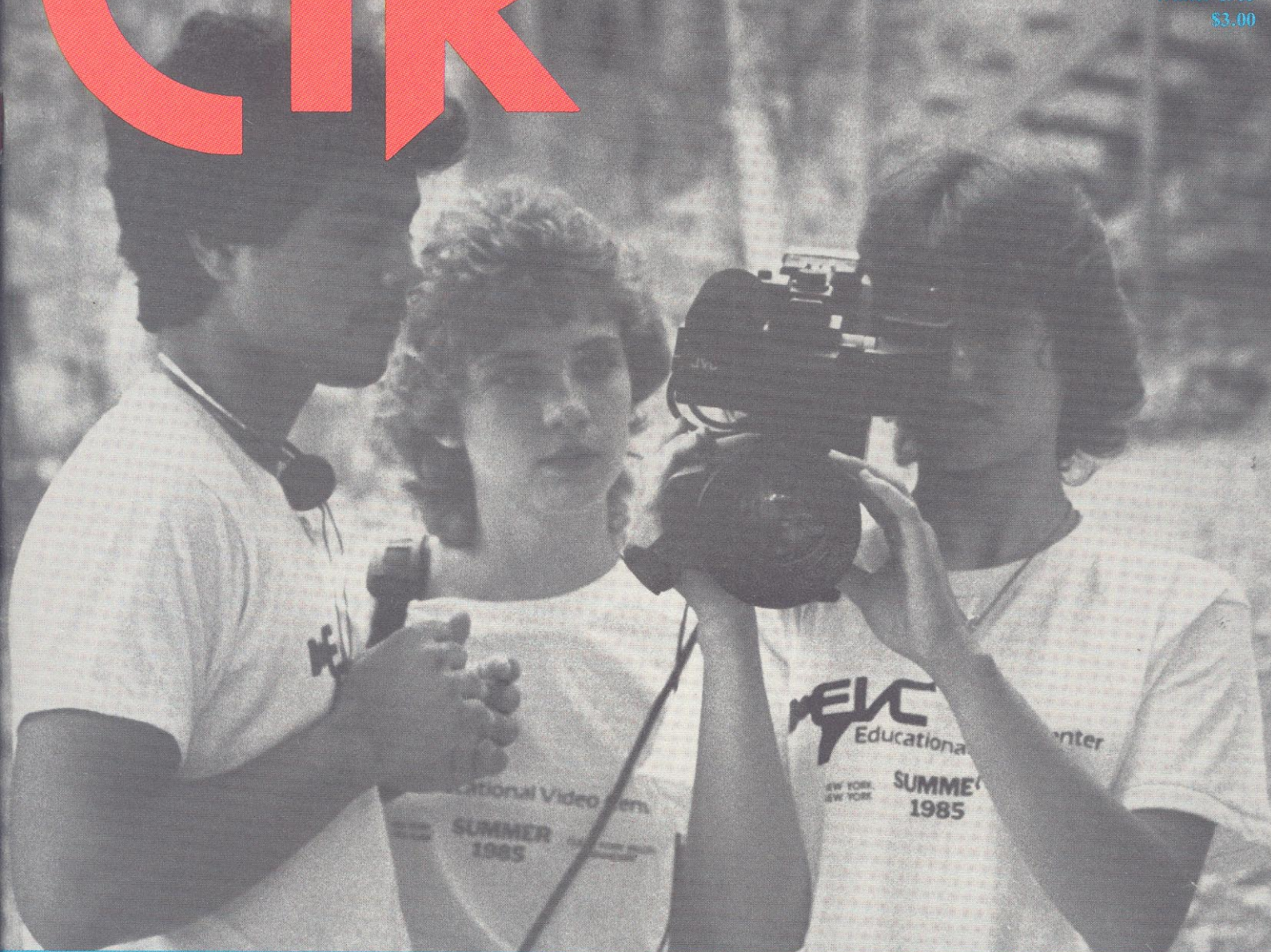


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Volume 8, No. 4

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Evans Graphics

Cover Art:
Evans Graphics

Cover Photo:
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Advertising
Chuck Sherwood
130 West 75th St. #14
New York, NY 10023
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LETTER FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

Education and cable access have a very special relationship. They are kindred spirits, and in at least one important way the purposes of both are identical. The fundamental purpose of access, and one of the primary purposes of education, is to provide citizens the tools they need to communicate with their neighbors.

Fortunately, many educational institutions are recognizing the importance of video in the equation that determines one's ability to communicate effectively. They are beginning to realize that since television is one of the major medium's from which people receive information, it is essential to have citizens (in addition to professional journalists) learn how to communicate using video. As a result, a number of educational institutions have added video production to their curriculum.

This issue of the *Community Television Review* examines how a few of these

educational institutions have used video. We will see how a number of educational institutions have improved the quality of education through using telecommunications technology. We will also look at how educators can enhance public relations by using video to disseminate information to the public on the directions that education is taking in their community. And more importantly, a number of articles will show how students have benefitted from learning video production skills.

This issue of *CTR* will also include its regular features. The Public Policy section presents a roundtable discussion on the importance of the Supreme Court's review of *City of Los Angeles v. Preferred Communications, Inc.* Dave Bloch's "The Community Videot" will show you how to develop two-way communications on a shoestring budget. And Andy Beecher's regular government access column (now

called "Government Access Corner") will profile government access operations in Norman, OK and Vancouver, WA.

In closing, I would like to thank Steve Fortriede (an active NFLCP member) and Don Rust from the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, IN for printing and mailing *CTR*. This issue and the last issue, have been printed almost at cost at the Allen County Public Library. As a result, *CTR* has realized substantial cost savings. It is a big help to us.

Paul D'ari

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The Importance Of A Human Values Approach To Telecommunications

Cooperating With The Arts And Humanities And With Public Access In Designing An Academic Telecommunications Program

By John Giancola

An imaginative and cooperative approach to the technology presently available is the best position from which to plan responses to our uncertain future.

Telecommunications studies are in a state of change. The distinctions between telecommunications and computer science are blurring as the marketplace brings both fields together through data communications, and what Wilson P. Dizard calls the "integrated information grid." All previously existing communication technologies are being continuously combined and refined to perform high speed transmission of written, voice and visual data. Technologies such as the telephone, television and the computer are entering a critical mass period. They are changing each other at a tremendous rate of acceleration, and this process will soon bring them together as a new communication format. The magnitude of change implied by these formats is many times greater than the changes brought about by television, the computer, or the telephone alone. "Future talk," which formed the basis of uncomfortable theoretical discussions a decade ago, is beginning to show signs of being a technological reality—largely in the business sector, but with implications for the fabric of all human endeavor.

Are curricular strategies really important in teaching information technologies? In his book, *Technological Order*, Jaques Ellul, the French sociologist lists the qualities of new technologies in the following way:

- "All technical progress exacts a price; that is, while it adds something on the one hand it subtracts something on the other.
- "All technical progress raises more problems than it solves, tempts us to see the consequent problems as technical in nature, and prods us to seek technical solutions to them.
- "The negative effects of technological innovation are inseparable from the positive. It is naive to say that technology is neutral, that it may be used

for good or bad ends; the good and bad effects are, in fact, simultaneous and inseparable.

- "All technological innovations have unforeseeable effects."

Wilson P. Dizard, in his thought-provoking book, *The Coming Information Age*, summarizes the apprehensions of several post-industrial prophets. He writes:

"This warnings of Mumford, Innis, and other critics have continued in recent years. Victor Ferkis of Georgetown University believes American society is at a critical juncture in its inability to understand adequately the political consequences of technical change. At the popular level, Alvin Toffler sees the prospect of social breakdown as the result of uncontrolled information overload. University of California researcher, Herbert Schiller, maintains that the manipulation of communications and information resources by a military-industrial establishment is undermining the prospects for democratic society in this country. One of the perils of micro-electronic technology is found in a study sponsored by an organization with certified establishment credits—the New York-based Conference Board, a business research group. Its report, *Information Technology: Some Critical Implications for Decision Makers*, takes a somber view of our ability to cope with the choices opened up by computers and other information technologies. We may create and strengthen the power of management elites, circumscribe the freedom of man, and create a new kind rich-poor gap between those, regardless of economic status, who know how to command information and those who do not.

University programs struggle to provide students in these fields with up-to-date technical information. However, very little curricula are being created which lend a critical perspective to these developments. A half dozen graduate schools have begun serious media studies pro-

grams. If these programs have an impact on education in general, then the strategy is a good one. An equally good strategy would be to develop a telecommunications studies program at the undergraduate level in cooperation with other disciplines. The involvement of many disciplines is desirable if telecommunications is to be taught with perspective. This essay addresses the role that the arts and humanities can play in shaping telecommunication studies, and the importance of the community programming experience in educating the student of media.

Humanities And The Medium Of Television

David Marc of Brown University posed a challenge to Humanities departments in his August 1984 cover story for *The Atlantic*.

"... [A]s Roland Barthes, Jean-Luc Godard, and the French devotees of Jerry Lewis have realized for years, television is American Dada, Charles Dickens on LSD, the greatest parody of European culture since *The Dunciad*. Yahoos and Houyhnhnms battling it out nightly with submachine guns. Sex objects stored in a box. Art or not art? This is largely a lexicographical quibble for the culturally insecure. Interesting? Only the hopelessly genteel could find such a phantasmagoria flat. . . ."

"Despite the efforts of a few television historians and critics like Erik Barnouw and Horace Newcomb, the fact is that the most effective purveyor of language, image, and narrative in American culture has failed to become a subject of lively humanistic discourse. It is laughed at, reviled, feared and generally treated as persona non grata by university humanities departments and the "serious" journals they patronize. Whether this is the cause or merely a symptom of the precipitous decline of the influence of the Humanities is difficult to say. In either case it is unfortunate that the scholars and teachers of

The Waste Land have found "the vast wasteland" unworthy of their attention. Edward Shils spoke for many literary critics when he chastened those who know better, but who still give their attention to works of mass culture, for indulging in a continuation

of childish pleasures. I cannot imagine an attitude more destructive to the future of both humanistic inquiry and television. If the imagination is to play an epistemological role in a scientific age, it cannot be restricted to 'safe' media. Shils teased pop-culture critics for trying to be 'Folksy'; unfortunately, it is literature that is in danger of becoming a precious antique."

It is fair to say that very little has happened of an interdisciplinary nature between humanities and television at the undergraduate level.

Funding institutions for the humanities have contributed to the creation of outstanding television programming, but few humanities scholars have applied the weight of their critical abilities to the barrage of media "stories" that have risen to a prominence in the minds of their students. Nor have they encouraged a course of study which would perpetuate a field of serious media criticism.

Art And The Medium Of Television

Artists have produced impressive results with the medium of video. Arts endowments have enjoined the artists to command video and audio as art forms. The pioneering funding institutions in this regard are the New York State Council on the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation and to a lesser extent The Guggenheim and The Jerome Foundations. This support has produced an array of art pieces in the media of audio and video. The result is a permeation of these new media with the traditional concerns of art. As with any aesthetic exploration of a new medium, the definition of art is changed as well. The point is that the new technology is

engaged by a process close to the heart and of that which is of human value—the artistic process.

Public Access And The Medium Of Television

Like the video art movement, public access was greatly facilitated by the technology of small format video. And like the movement in media arts, the public access movement has achieved considerable results in the past fifteen years. Though local cable programming has far to go and many obstacles to overcome, its existence is especially significant when one considers the public sector's long history of failure to gain access to the broadcasting medium. Here again is the question of whether a new technology will circumscribe a time-honored value, or will that value find new meaning and dimension through the new technology? In this case the value is "community" in the broadest sociological sense. It's corollaries are local awareness, local involvement and the right of local self-determination. Within the variagated history of localism, television technology is a recent arrival. Yet, its power to overshadow the importance of localism is immense. Local cable television programming, on the other hand, can extend, refine, and reinforce the local dynamic in bountiful ways. Art media and local media, and the strategies inherent in sustaining them, offer helpful insights into creating information technology-curricula that keep the social dimension close at hand.

An Interdisciplinary Curricula Approach

The Humanities. David Marc's point is well taken. The academician's attitude is that the media is below discussion. It is somewhat analogous to the Victorian attitude toward sex. They know that a powerful influence is present, but ignoring it appears to be the best route toward elevating the mind, building critical skills and contributing to the student's overall freedom of expression. The attitude does not serve

the humanities well and it does nothing to suggest that the media might someday be improved.

Stimulating a discourse would involve taking the media to task in the areas that are closest to the Humanities. These areas include writing, narrative and adaptation. The new medium of television takes great liberties with fiction and with history. To those outside the medium, it appears to be a baffling monster out of control, but to those who produce for it, no such mystique exists. Producing for the media is a craft, a craft that is heavily influenced by the needs of advertisers and by the history of Hollywood film and to some extent vaudeville. (Sitcoms are almost always built around one principal dilemma.) The dual preoccupations with sponsorship and entertainment tend to flatten programs into formulas, even when they are inspired by great works. Writing and adaptation, however, are still required.

A sample interdisciplinary course might be one in which visual adaptations are studied. The course could be based on the experience of reading great novels as compared to viewing specific visual adaptations. Students could be challenged to reconceive segments of the film or tape or re-write them to express better the feel of the written word. This course would have many dimensions, and would stimulate dialogue between the humanities and the culture of visual technology. Besides creating a stronger critical perspective of media, the course would also emphasize the greatness (and in some cases the non-adaptability) of certain works of literature.

It is important to create critical perspectives of the media. Like all technologies, its meeting points with older disciplines are part of the substance of its present cultural form. Challenging a student's easy assumptions about visual media is not easy to do, but it can effectively enhance that student's ability to reflect and think critically.

The Arts. Many fine arts departments either ignore video as an art medium or treat it as a taboo. In fact, the aesthetic in-

novations in electronics are numerous and the resources available to universities in this area are many. The Whitney Museum of American Art and The Museum of Modern Art both have permanent video galleries and the latter has established a video study center alongside its prestigious film study center. MOMA also has a circulating video collection. More importantly, artists have engineered new kinds of equipment with which to relate to the medium's particular properties. There are colorizers, synthesizers, frame buffers and computer interfaces. All of these enhance individual expression. Since the later 1960s, artists from many disciplines have worked in the media of video and audio, creating installations and single channel pieces of great imagination. Most of these works were created by people working independently and non-commercially in spite of the high costs of the medium. The rise of commercial computer graphics is also noteworthy, although the aesthetic results have been less impressive. Like the new information technologies that arrive each year, small format video and audio were also new technologies at one time. In the jargon of information, small format video is definitely "user-friendly" and opens up a spectrum of applications not possible on large expensive systems. It is important that students of information technology see the meeting points between technology and art. Art has many results; among them is its power to reach us at the depths of our humanness.

A sample interdisciplinary course might be one in which video and computerized imagery are taught as media of personal expression. Such a course would be ideal if the technology is laid bare in its most essential form, giving the creator a maximum understanding of the process in both analog and digital terms. On another level, the experience fosters a stronger critical approach to new technological formats, especially as concerns their "user-friendly" attributes.

Public Access. The presence of local cable programming on campus is of mutual benefit to the student of information technology and to the Access Center. For the student it offers an opportunity to create programming that addresses an audience within geographic reach. Presented with the challenge of viable local programming, the student encounters responsibility in the media from a unique perspective. Narrowcasting is media of response. The programming is not designed to be a pas-

sive viewing experience, but rather one that leads the viewer into more involvement. The student can experience the electronic information system as an integral part of community activities. It is not an information system that "tells" while the viewer "listens." It is neither definitive nor controlled, it is a community resource. It is both a reality and a symbol in the learning experience. In reality it is open access to a distribution system. Symbolically, it is democratic access to information technology. It is similar to the symbol of "user-friendly" technology. They both re-inforce the human dimension of the experience.

The access center also benefits from the university ties. Student interns are a valuable resource in the development of public access. Local cable programming is not easily grasped by the community at first. In this educating task, the university can offer helpful cooperation. Also in the swift rivers of a changing cable industry, the university can be a solid institutional affiliation. The addition of community

video to the curriculum adds to the sense of "institutionalizing" the process.

* * * * *

A telecommunications program is by definition a future oriented program. Orientating oneself to the future involves strategies. In education those strategies are curricular. It is difficult to develop strategies in the absence of sure footing. The exponential rate of technological change, accelerating within the market place, does not suggest a clear direction at present. An imaginative and cooperative approaches to the technology presently available is the best position from which to plan responses to our uncertain future.

John Giancola is the director of telecommunications at the University of Tampa. He was also an instructor in film and television at New York University and director of the Media Program at the New York State Council on the Arts.

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Empowering Disadvantaged Students

By Liz Grabiner

Garbage is strewn all over the courtyard of an abandoned building in New York City. Fifteen high school students walk carefully over the broken glass as they make their way into the building's dark entrance. John, a senior at Bronx Regional High School, quickly puts his video camera on his shoulder and points it at an apartment door covered with graffiti. He presses his thumb against the red "record" button and nods to his classmate Rich. The videotape is rolling as Rich knocks on the door. There is no answer. The smell of urine in the hallway gets stronger. He knocks again. This time there is an answer. The door is pulled back away from its frame. To the students' surprise, a woman's face peers out from the shadows.

Sandra adjusts her headphones and checks the sound level. Rich explains that they are a documentary video class working on a project about housing problems in their community and that they would like to interview her about what it is like to live in this abandoned building.

The woman thinks for a moment and then agrees to let the class into her apartment for an interview. "I live here with my husband who is an epileptic," she begins. "We have no electricity, or running water. And there is a whole nest of rats that run around here especially at night. It's just terrible living here, but I don't know how to find another place to live."

The students go back to school with their social studies teacher, Avrum Barlowe, and talk about what they saw. They decide they want to continue making their documentary on housing, but not without helping this woman find a decent place to live. The bell rings, they put away the video equipment, and go to their next class.

These students are part of an innovative program run by the Educational Video Center (EVC). EVC is a non-profit resource center which was established to help schools develop their own video programs. Currently, Steven Goodman, director of EVC, is developing a program at Bronx Regional High School, an alternative school for dropouts who complained about the impersonal and overcrowded

conditions in their former schools. Goodman, who has been teaching video for six years, explains, "in many schools we found that video equipment was stored away in some closet somewhere, and whoever knew how to use it, had left the school a long time ago. So there was a great need to get the equipment into the hands of the teachers and the kids. That is one of our main objectives at EVC."

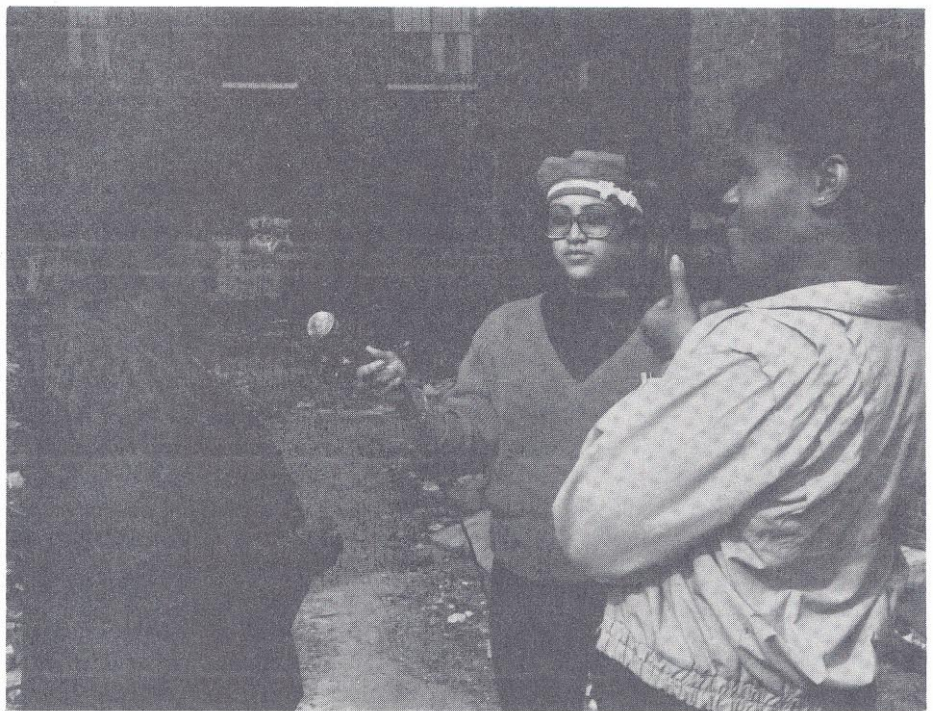
At Bronx Regional, in addition to training students in documentary production, Goodman helps them find jobs and internships. He also advises administrators on the equipment they should buy, and he trains teachers to use video in the classroom. For example, in a health education course that is team taught by the assistant principal, Nancy Mohr, and a social worker, Harriet Gribben, Goodman is introducing video to both students and teachers. In this class, students are making a documentary on teenage parents. Young parents and speakers from community health clinics and social service agencies are interviewed by the class on camera.

Goodman first began using video while

attending Columbia University Journalism School. *Shotgun*, the documentary he produced, was a portrait of a teenage gang member before and after he commits a brutal murder and is sent to prison for life. The tape was so powerful it was awarded "Work of Special Distinction" at the Tokyo Video Festival and was shown at festivals in France and Italy.

Having seen the desperate condition of life that awaits so many inner-city teenagers, Goodman decided to do what he could to help other teenagers stay in school. He began teaching video workshops at Downtown Community Television Center.

In 1981, Goodman began working in his first alternative high school—Satellite Academy on New York's lower east side. He encouraged his video students to take the camera off the tripod and into the community. One of their first projects was *Artie: Down and Out on the Bowery*. This is the story of an alcoholic who lived in an abandoned truck on the Bowery. While making the tape, the three young producers spent their Easter vacation,



Bronx Regional students interview a homeless woman.

practically living on the street with Artie. Their hard work paid off. They were awarded scholarships to a summer video program at the State University of New York in Buffalo. The program also won Sony's "1st Annual Home Video Competition" and was shown on NBC's "Today Show."

Maurice Crenshaw, one of the student producers of *Artie*, has graduated from high school, and is in college. He is also working part time as an editor in a computer editing suite. Maurice is someone who really benefited from the video program at Satellite. Before he enrolled there, he felt a failure. "I thought I was dumb. I failed all the tests I had to take. I realize now that it was partly because the school was overcrowded and the teachers had trouble controlling the students. If it weren't for video, I don't know what I'd be doing now. Video kept me going. It was something to look forward to. I'm in college now. I never thought that would happen to me."

The success of the students who have participated in this program demonstrates that this method of teaching is extremely effective, especially for students who have had difficulties in a traditional classroom setting. Aside from learning how to make community video documentaries, these teenagers are learning that they are able to make changes in their lives, and improve their neighborhoods.

Encouraged by the program's success in New York, Goodman decided to take his

program out of the city and into another impoverished area—Appalachia. For one month during the summer, he and English teacher Suzanne Valenza, co-directed a video camp where students from the poorest communities in New York lived and worked alongside local teenagers from Tennessee, Virginia and Kentucky. The program was jointly administered by EVC and Marie Cirillo, a community organizer who has been working in Appalachia for many years.

Despite the limitations on time, staffing, and funding, this group of young people managed to produce three documentaries on hunger in the area. Each day small groups of students and a teacher would go out with their video cameras and interview the people living around them. The teenagers from New York became instructors as well as students as they coached the rural kids in verité style camera techniques. At the end of each day, everyone would review what had been shot and plan out their strategies for the following days.

One group decided to produce a program about Letta, a woman who lived near the camp with her two sons. This family lives without running water, electricity or enough food to eat. For an entire day, the students taped them hauling water from a nearby stream (which they had to drive to), digging potatoes for dinner, collecting aluminum cans from garbage bins to sell to the junk dealer, eating their only meal of the day together, and singing songs to the strum of Letta's guitar. The resulting documentary, "Letta's Family," is a beautiful, moving portrait that illustrates the strength and resourcefulness of people trying to survive under impossible living conditions. "Letta's Family" received wide exposure. It was shown at a conference on hunger in Knoxville, TN, and has been cablecast on Channel 20 in Knoxville and Channel 25 in New York. It is also scheduled to air on Japan's Educational Channel, NHK, as a part of an international collection of student work.

In many ways, life in Appalachia resembled other summer camp experiences. The kids bunked down in cabins in the woods, and they cooked, cleaned, fought, sang and played together. When the camp visited Appalshop, a community media center in Kentucky, a cook-out was given in their honor. One camper from Tennessee gave her impressions on the mixing of the "city slickers" with the "country folk": "When we were at Appalshop, everyone

was square-dancing. I thought it was great because the New Yorkers had never done anything like this, so it was fun teaching them and being with them. It was really crazy. Then after the dancing, our sleeping arrangements. Everyone was crowded in right next to each other. We looked like a can of sardines, except we are bigger than sardines."

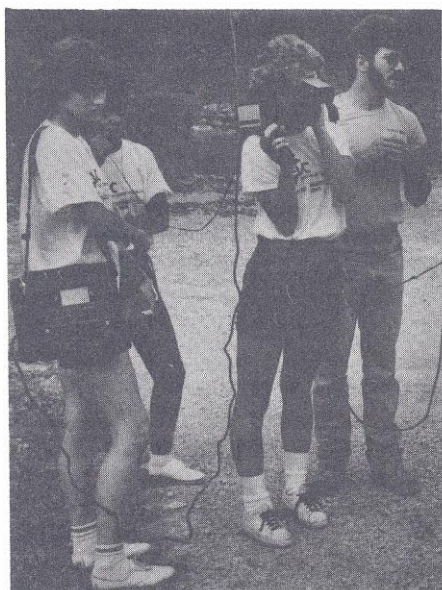
With only two professionals on staff to teach video and be camp counselors at the same time, it was a miracle that so much was accomplished. At the end of the month they organized a live broadcast for members of the community. This was quite an exciting event since residents of this area received extremely limited television service. Fifteen hundred feet of cable was unraveled over the mountainous terrain, and it was connected to three televisions in separate homes. After the students' tapes were transmitted to the community, they sang camp songs to the audience. "The reaction of the community was overwhelming," says Goodman. "This is the way community access should be."

After this was over, John, one of the students from New York, told Valenza, "my whole attitude about people has changed since I've been here. I've learned that there are some nice generous people left on this earth. Because of the video camp, I'm more aware of what is going on in other parts of the country."

Unfortunately, the month came to an end and the teenagers from New York went back to their homes in Brooklyn, Queens and the South Bronx. Some would continue studying video in their high schools. In Appalachia, Marie Cirillo is continuing to train young people in community video production. She is starting Rural Video, a program which will soon be functioning as a community access center.

The combination of urban and rural kids working together in the fresh air, learning how to express themselves through video and cooperating on group projects, proved to be an exceptional experience for the students as well as the staff. After coming back to New York at the end of the month, Goodman, exhausted by the demands of the project said, "it was hard, harder than I expected. There were many problems we uncovered along the way, but we're just beginning to tap the unlimited potential of what kids can do if they are only given the chance."

Liz Grabiner works for Educational Video Center.



Low-income students from New York, Tennessee, Virginia, and Kentucky spend a month in Appalachia producing documentaries on hunger.

Providing Access To Children

By Donna Dager

They race in, throw their books down and begin to talk all at once.

"What are we going to do today? Can I do the camera? I want to do a music video! Can we be the reporters?" Finally the questions cease and plans for the hour are outlined. Everyone gets busy, writing scripts, practicing camera shots, acting out parts. Soon, it's time to shoot.

The director steps up beside the camera, catching her foot in the light stand. As it begins its slow fall to the ground, the instructor steps in to catch it with one hand while motioning for attention with the other. "Please be careful about the lights!" she pleads. "Move s-l-o-w-l-y!"

"Quiet on the set, please!" the director yells. Talking dribbles into whispers. "I said, Quiet on the set, please!!" The young voice commands attention this time. "Roll tape!"

"Tape is rolling!" another voice sings out.

"Wait a minute," the instructor says. "You don't just say 'tape is rolling.' You have to look at the tape, make sure it's rolling and then say it, okay?"

The tape operator nods happily. The director surveys the set and begins the countdown on her fingers. Five, four, three, three . . . oops! Better start again. Five, four, three, two, one and CUE TALENT!"

"Hi, I'm Jeffrey Mason." "And I'm Sara Salazar. Welcome to Kid's Magazine. Today we will be talking to a furniture maker from outer space . . ."

"Wait a minute, wait a minute!" The instructor, watching from the background, steps onto the set. "Where's the microphone?"

Cast and crew laugh, someone grabs the mike from its stand underneath a table and the production begins again. "Quiet on the set, please! . . ."

For the past year, the Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA) has been teaching television production and critical viewing skills to fourth and fifth grade students in the Mountain View public schools. Funded in part by the Mountain View Community Access Board, "Video For Kids" provides young

students with a unique opportunity to learn more about what goes on behind the television screen. In a special arrangement with Mountain View public schools, CSMA teaches television production to students twice a week. Four groups of students have completed the program.

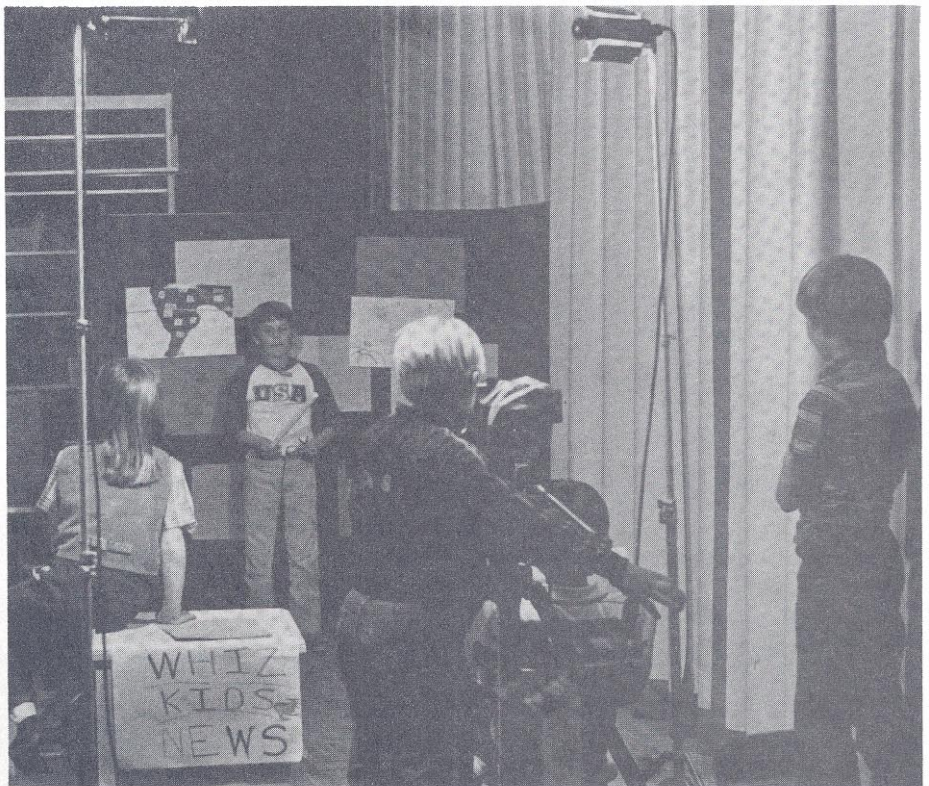
Starting Out

When the project began, our first challenge was to view television through the eyes of our students. Having grown up with television all of our lives, we have become saturated with its many messages. In essence, we are immune to television's more blatant manipulations. Children are much more susceptible to the influential vibrations emanating from the television screen. Unequipped with the skills to judge what they see, children accept almost everything they watch as real. Our hope was to give these kids, not only the opportunity to experience television pro-

ductions of their own, but also to give them a beginning background in "media-speak"—that pervasive language of television. We wanted them to be able to grasp the psychological, cultural, and artistic techniques of programming. We wanted them to begin to question what they were fed on television on a daily basis. At the same time, they would learn to appreciate some of the more positive aspects of the television experience.

The initial questions we had could only be answered by trial and error. Could children this age handle bulky $\frac{3}{4}$ " U-Matic equipment? Would they appreciate the delicacy of such equipment and treat it with respect? Could they use it creatively, for their own expression? Would we get any programs out of "Video for Kids," or would their work simply be too "raw" to be cablecast? Armed with these questions and a camera, VCR, and set of lights, we set out to find the answers.

Our initial apprehension turned into de-



"Whiz Kids News" cast and crew taping the weather forecast for grades K-6.

light as we found the kids capable and full of enthusiasm, both in front of the camera and behind the camera. That enthusiasm was channeled so that portable equipment, borrowed from the access center at Viacom Cablevision, went back to the center in the same condition in which it came. Viacom's access director, Lon Berquist, was encouraging about utilizing portable video equipment with nine and ten-year-old students. Having taught video to 12 and 13 year olds, he was confident the younger kids could handle it. "Just bring it back alive!" was his final warning as the equipment was carted out the door.

The first class session included an introduction to the equipment and was very structured. Kids were presented with equipment names and functions through a "naming game." They were given index cards with the words "camera," "VCR," "tripod," and so forth. They were asked to match the card to the correct piece of

equipment. With this initial introduction, students became familiar with the terminology, the equipment operation, and some safety rules. Each student had the opportunity to act as camera operator and to perform in front of the camera. Though some students were "natural hams" and needed encouragement in toning down their performances, and others were "ice-cubes" and needed coaching in melting a bit—all enjoyed viewing themselves on the monitor at the end of class. They were on television—wow! Viewing yourself on video is a magical experience at any age, but especially when you are in the fourth or fifth grade!

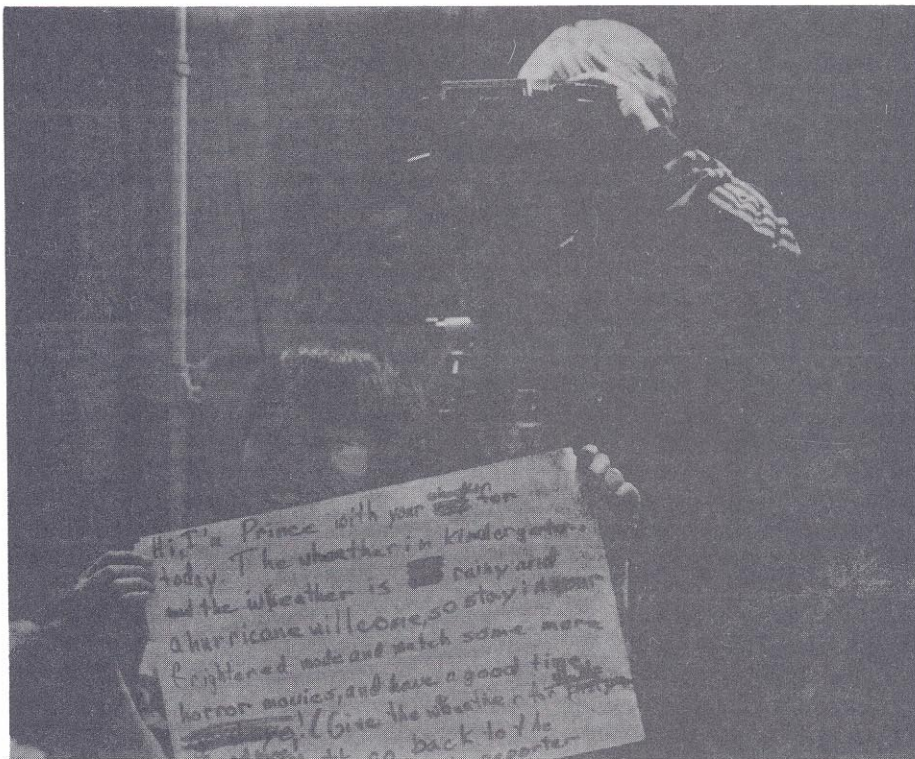
Having made it through the first day, we were ready to tackle the next of our eight classes in the workshop. From this beginning class, we outlined the types of television programs we wished to discuss and have the kids use as "models" for launching productions of their own. We chose those programs many children view

at this age—commercials, music videos, news programs and magazine shows. Devising a loose curriculum which approached each of these program types from cultural, artistic, technical and psychological angles—we would show examples of the program, discuss it and then get to work on student produced programs. The kids wrote scripts and rotated through cast and crew positions when it came time to shoot.

Critical Viewing and Production Skills

Commercials provided a great starting point for lively discussion. Since the students were quite familiar with the commercial format, they had a lot to say about commercials they watched on television. Next, each student was given a masked container and told what product they would be selling to "our viewers at home." Points about selling techniques were discussed, along with methods for making a commercial more powerful. Each student gave his or her product a brand name—Crunchy Bunchy Cereal, Fish-Chick Cat Food, Town Mouse Soup and Frog-Brains-in-a-Box—were some of those chosen. A script was written, and the product was presented in front of the camera.

After taping the commercials, students watched the tape and commented on the selling strengths and weaknesses of each. In this way, students experienced both sides of the television screen in the same hour. They took the role of the television personality, using schemes to sell a product; they then had an opportunity to view the commercials. They tried to detect what "arm-twisting" techniques fellow classmates used to try to get them to buy a product. The commercials were extremely well done, with students singing, dancing and entertaining their viewing audience in order to sell their products. It was clear that they had picked up a great deal of information about commercials from having watched them for close to ten years. When students left the session, they were able to verbalize their impressions and



Herminio Quiroz holds the cue card as Eric Nash tapes a segment from an "evening newscast."

thoughts about commercials more clearly. They also developed greater awareness about what they were told and sold when they watched commercials on television at home.

This introduction to the art of critical television viewing was to be used throughout the next three weeks, as we worked our way through music videos, news programs and magazine shows. After viewing examples of each genre, kids created programs of their own. Some of those programs included a story-music video to the theme song from the movie *Beverly Hills Cop*, in which a thief tried to get away with stealing instruments from a rock group; a news program reporting on a "stolen apple" and a tetherball contest between local champs; and a magazine show where hosts interviewed creatures from another planet. Each session was an action-packed hour of discussion, questions, and energized activity!

Special Considerations

Students in the *Video for Kids* pilot project were released from regular classes two hours a week and also attended after-school sessions. The available space on school campuses was limited, and *Video for Kids* staff often worked under somewhat challenging conditions. We did our best to meet these challenges with as much forethought as possible. Nevertheless, we were sometimes surprised by unanticipated events resulting from the combination of nine- and ten-year olds cramped together and video equipment quirks and foibles.

Kids are fascinated by the camera and eager to get their hands on it and do with it what kids do best—play. This sense of play and the tremendous energy and enthusiasm they bring to video production, is a wonderful asset. At the same time, such energy must be guided, for the sake of the equipment and the sanity of the instructor. Kids must understand that they are not playing with a toy. They must understand that the equipment is delicate, expensive and not easily replaced. Once

they were given a standard procedure to approach the equipment, we found that the students were quite capable of taking care of portable access equipment. We asked them to take the following steps:

- #1. Step up to camera, place your hand on the handle.
- #2. Unlock the pan lock.
- #3. Unlock the tilt lock.
- #4. Once the locks are off, always keep your hand on the tripod handle, and NEVER LET GO!

Procedures were reversed for leaving the camera. Students were also warned about keeping the lens pointed away from bright or reflected light. They practiced this rule when they were shooting.

These short safety steps were easily remembered and it ensured camera safety.

Another difficulty proved to be the numerous cables and equipment which litter the studio area. We often worked in extremely small areas, and in their haste students were often knocking down lights and tripping over equipment and cables. No matter how often they were warned, this continued to happen. Students are so focused on where they are going, and so excited about getting there, that they fail to pay attention to what's in the way. The best solution is to keep the cables out of their way, and tape them down if necessary. The instructor should also *always* be ready with an open hand to catch a falling lightstand!

We received valuable lessons each time students came to the workshop. As every student took a turn at directing, he or she was empowered to speak and to command attention, and other students were asked to really listen when one of their peers took charge. They also worked in teams in order to complete productions on time. They encountered some of the difficulties any video producer will have to face—technical problems which slowed the production or prevented it from continuing.

Facing their disappointment and frustration, the students made alternate plans and worked around the problems. They were amazingly resilient in their ability to change direction and "go with the flow." Access users everywhere could learn something about this talent for flexibility in the face of technical malfunctions. With or without equipment—the show must go on!

The Art Of Visual Thinking

Video for Kids staff took time to point out specific ways of utilizing the camera to enhance visual thinking and communication. Once they learned how to operate the camera and VCR, the kids could begin to think creatively about their shots. We would often tape a scene and then watch it, getting feedback about camera shots and angles and the effect they had on the story and on the viewer. We could then go back and re-shoot the same scene, using different shots. In this way, students could see the effects of a long shot, medium shot, low angle shot or close-up. After watching the scene, the instructor might ask, "How could we make this even more interesting to the viewer?" Students would come up with such ideas as using more props found around the room—"He could go to the refrigerator, open the door and we could zoom in to the can of soda. . . . She could wheel her vacuum cleaner in on the cart and we could pan, and then zoom out and tilt up to her fact." Students learned to think about the visual choices they were making and the effect of those choices on their programs. Technical skills merged with creative decision-making to form more interesting programs.

Results

The results of the *Video for Kids* workshops were exciting. Parents, school staff and students were invited to a final showing of student programs at Viacom's studio. Here they were given a tour of production facilities and shown the playback area (where the programs would be aired

on the public access channel). Students were eager to show their videos to parents, and demonstrated use of portapak equipment during the studio tour. Student-produced programs were well-done, fun to watch and of cablecast quality. At the onset of the project, we were uncertain as to whether we could produce even five minutes of programming for our access channel. Yet at the conclusion of the six-month workshop series, we ended up with three half-hour shows. Kids were eager to share all their new knowledge with other classmates, parents, friends and school staff. The *Video for Kids* workshops gave them the opportunity to look at television from both sides of the picture. It gave other adults and children an opportunity to learn more about public access opportunities in the Mountain View community, and to watch with delight as children and students became the youngest "access producers" in the city. Through this access program, children were able to engage actively in the excitement of learning more about the community and the world in which they live.

Past, Present, Future

Since the program was such a success with students, school staff and parents, the Community School of Music and Arts received a second grant from the Mountain View Community Access Board. In the fall of 1985 we began a new program, "VideoDramatics," which teaches fourth and fifth graders to work with video in the creation of simple dramatic stories, made for the television screen. Students participated in improvisational exercises and further developed their video skills, creating short pieces which encourage them to develop characters, setting and time.

As part of their grant agreement, CSMA developed a "Video for Kids" curriculum guide, outlying our program in more detail. This guide is available for those interested in learning more or beginning a program of their own with kids. Anyone interested may contact CSMA directly for more information. A second

curriculum guide for the "VideoDramatics" program will also be completed in the spring of 1986.

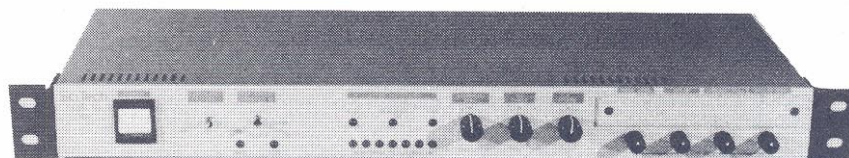
Bringing public access to elementary school students is a rewarding experience. We look forward to offering this opportunity to a greater number of Mountain View youth in the future. With the support of the Community Access Board and Viacom, CSMA's "Video for Kids" and "VideoDramatics" prove that kids are a vital part of the cable community. Projects such as this bring out the true spirit of access. In Mountain View, making our

schools and kids a vital part of the "public" in public access is a priority.

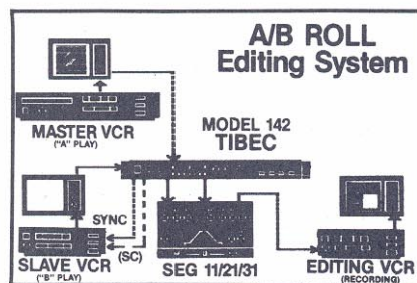
Donna Dager is the Video Program Coordinator at the Community School of Music and Arts. She also works in the Community Programming Department at Viacom Cablevision, and has a Master's Degree in Communications/Media Arts from Norwich University, Montpelier, Vermont.

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The Electronic Classroom In Trempeleau County, Wisconsin

By Roger Hagon

In Trempeleau County, WI the cows outnumber the people two to one; there are no traffic lights (anywhere in the county); and there are only 4,000 cable subscribers. Yet, Trempeleau County's Western Wisconsin Communications Cooperative operates one of the most innovative rural cable systems in the country.

Given its size, one of the system's most extraordinary features is its two-way network that links eight schools and a technical institute. The Western Wisconsin Communications Cooperative was the first rural cable system to develop a two-way instructional delivery system for a public school. And Trempeleau County is an important model that other educational institutions in rural areas are using to develop their own interactive systems.

The impetus for the development of this system came ten years ago, when the rural school system in Trempeleau County began finding it increasingly difficult to provide their students with educational opportunities, comparable to those that were available at larger, urban institutions. With enrollments varying from 1521 to 270 (K-12), Trempeleau County schools have never had extensive resources. Further, most of Trempeleau County's districts were experiencing declining enrollments, a

situation which had put pressure on an already beleaguered curriculum. The sharing of resources through the use of two-way cable technology seemed to offer possibilities.

School administrators joined interested members of the community and representatives from several cooperatives in the region, to discuss what could be done to build a cable system that would serve both educational needs and general needs of the community.

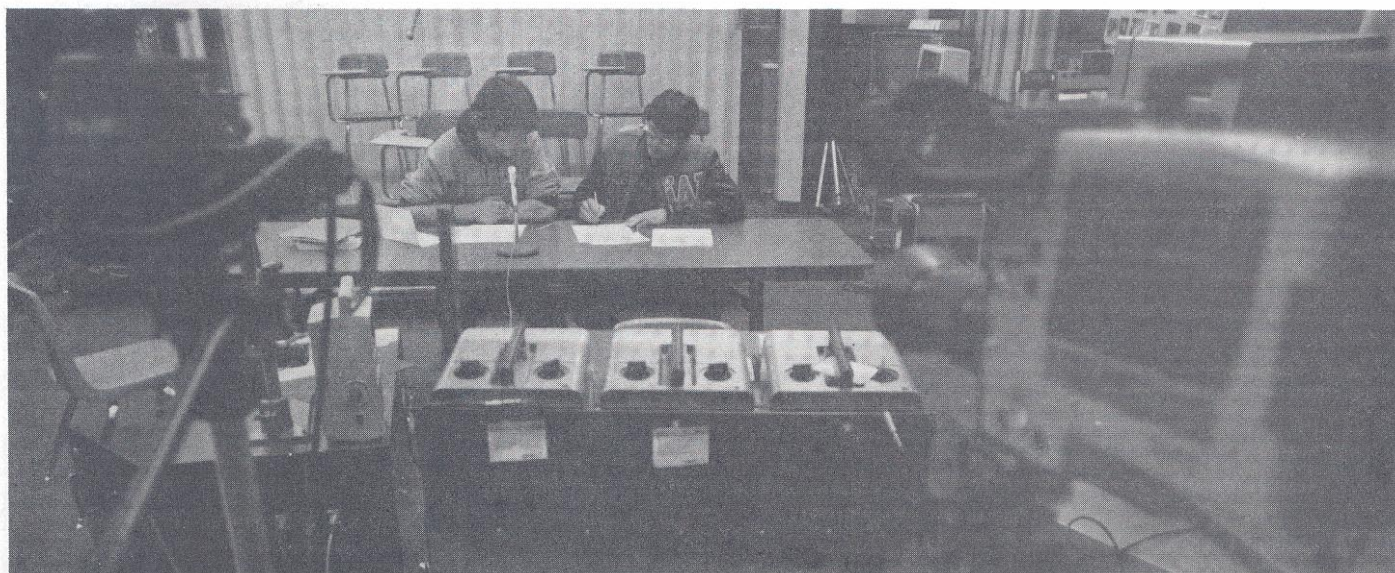
The low population density of Trempeleau County made it obvious that commercial cable companies would not be interested in marketing their services in our area. However, with over 32 active cooperatives in Trempeleau County, and with the substantial success of rural electrification still in the memory of many county residents, establishing a cooperative to construct the system made a great deal of sense. Therefore, we created the Western Wisconsin Communications Cooperative, a user-owned cable company with a commitment to not only serve home subscribers, but also to build and maintain an interactive educational system.

The interactive system accomplished a great deal for the schools. It made it possible for us to share staff and students, and

we have been able to save important low enrollment classes, and even expand some of them. Although we began with only a few experimental classes late in 1979 (with a lot of dead air), the system now offers a day long selection of courses that fill most of the available school hours. The available courses include: Spanish, German, shorthand, digital electronics, and advanced computers.

When our teachers first went on the cable, they did so with very few models to follow. Instructional television has been with us for a long time, but two-way teaching is a completely different medium. Fortunately, we soon discovered that it's much more like a conventional classroom. Notions of production and scripting have very little meaning when the audience you are speaking to can talk back. As with good classroom teaching, two-way teaching is fully interactive (the teacher sees and hears the students at each site, and the students see and hear the teacher and all the students). With monitors tuned to each participating site, audio and video contact is complete.

As in good classroom teaching, preparation is crucial. Extensive preparation is not unique to an electronically interactive classroom, but many of our teachers have



Two students receive instruction in digital electronics from a teacher who is 25 miles away. By Wade Britzius.

told us that this system has helped them become better teachers, even in their regular classes.

We have tried to make our system as "user friendly" as possible. However, a few modifications have been necessary in order to make a successful transition from the classroom to the studio. For example, we have found that a mounted overhead camera with macro-focus lens is far superior to a blackboard. The teacher finds it more convenient to write in normal scale on paper, and the students find it easier to see. It didn't take our shorthand teacher long to figure out that compared to the overhead camera technique, producing shorthand characters on the wall in chalk was more like cave painting than taking dictation.

One adjustment that was a bit more difficult for some teachers was the requirement that they stay in one place. At first we used student camera operators who would try to follow the instructor back and forth to the blackboard and around the room. However, seasickness was the frequent result. Soon student camera people were out of a job, replaced by a simple piece of technology—a camera switcher. Now each of our studios are equipped with three cameras—one for the overhead, one on the teacher, and one on the students. Our instructors sit at a teaching station with a microphone mixer, a camera switcher and monitor. We have also provided inputs for a VCR and computer.

Although this may start to sound complicated, it really is not. One switch turns it all off and on. If everything is properly adjusted in the morning by the AV people at each site, there is really very little additional adjustment needed. When adjustments are needed, a student can usually do it.

While we are proud of the fact that the two-way has been technically successful, the whole system would remain no more than an impressive bit of educational gadgetry if we could not show that it contributed to effective learning by our students. We do not claim that this system is in all respects as good as having a teacher in the classroom. However, we believe it is the next best thing. Between 1980 and 1983, studies undertaken by the University of Wisconsin-Stout, showed that there was no significant difference in test scores and grades between students receiving instruction at sites where the teacher was present and those who received the same instruction through the interactive system.

Further, students are comfortable with

the medium; they view it as a break from their usual routines, and they do not seem to regard their teachers as distant and remote, even though in fact they may be. But perhaps the best evidence we have that this system is not cold and heartless is when we see students talking together between classes, from site to site just as they would in a regular classroom. One of the unplanned outcomes of this informal communication has been to help foster greater cooperation between schools, and to give our students a larger view of the world.

As every teacher knows, not all communication can be tolerated at all times. If education is to take place, discipline must exist. Again, as in the ordinary classroom, it is the teacher who is responsible for seeing that it is maintained. The teacher is supported at each site by an AV person who can be called upon to assist, if necessary, and to hand out papers, proctor tests, and the like. Even when our AV people get involved in other duties, we have had very few problems. Most of our students in interactive classes are there because they want to be; they are a self selected group who have chosen to take what is usually regarded as an advanced or specialty class.

Two recent developments have added to the scope of our two-way system. The first, a device we call the DCI (data/call interface), combines several features in a system for calling between our schools and for sending and receiving computer based programs and data. In designing the system, Apple Computers, printers, and modems were combined with a "home brew" switching, scanning, and calling unit that has made electronic mail between our schools a reality. In the future,

we hope to make one further improvement in this system through the addition of a facimile copier, line reader, or another digital device with which printed documents can be scanned, saved, and sent without needing to enter them through the computer keyboard.

The second major development is the establishment of a microwave link between Project CIRCUIT and our regional technical institute, twenty-five miles to the south in LaCrosse. Built with grant money from state vocational funds, this extension will make it possible to offer courses for associate and vocational degree credit to advanced high school students and adults in the Trempeleau County Area. In the future, we hope to include additional colleges to the north and south of us.

An interactive system will never replace the classroom teacher; to try to use it for such a purpose because of shortsighted economic considerations would be a distortion of its original intent. It would also be a disaster. For one thing, the numbers that can be effectively handled in a two-way teaching situation are quite small; the maximum should be 20 students, with no more than 7 at each site. As the numbers increase, just as in a conventional classroom, personal contact decreases.

On the other hand, a two-way system can enrich a school's curriculum. It facilitates the pooling of resources, which makes it possible to offer classes that have a limited demand. After five years of full time operation, we remain convinced that if used properly, the interactive classroom is indeed the next best thing to being there.

Roger Hagon is the director of project CIRCUIT.



Shorthand teacher is seated at the teaching station writing visuals for the overhead camera. The class is being taught to three remote sites, plus the participating sites. By Wade Britzius.

Broadband Telecommunications in The Dallas School System

By Diana Braiden Radspinner

During the franchising years, a complete network allowing inter and intra communications between students, teachers, and the community was offered to schools and administrators throughout the nation. Franchises guaranteed channel space for educators on both the subscriber and the institutional networks. The future looked bright. Access equipment was allocated for video production. Modulators and modems were promised to allow instant data transfer from the classroom to the administration offices.

What has happened? Why have the efforts to wire our schools and universities gotten off to such a slow start?

There are a variety of reasons. Low test scores, discipline problems, ever-changing curriculum guidelines and merit pay have all taken their toll. These issues have consumed the resources of teachers and administrators, and they have been unable to devote necessary attention to utilizing new communications technology.

The process has been extremely slow. However, a number of educational institutions are taking advantage of this important opportunity. And there are indications that in the near future, we will see a growing number of school systems construct elaborate telecommunications systems.

The Dallas Independent School District (DISD) is in the process of constructing a broadband communications network within and between its 217 facilities. Cable drops will connect its 189 schools and 28 support buildings. Unlike most franchises that allow for one free drop to each school, the Dallas franchise requires all construction for institutional users be "at cost." This has resulted in the tedious process of allocating funds for construction. That task is now complete, and all drops are planned to be in place by the spring of 1986.

In addition, taxpayers approved a bond issue that contained \$3.5 million for cable construction within all Dallas schools. Dallas is expected to be one of the first large city educational institutions in the country to commit to a broadband telecommunications system to interconnect

its facilities.

What does the school district hope to accomplish? Immediate plans call for a pilot energy load management system that could result in energy cost savings of 20 percent each year. Bids are also being taken on modems to connect the data processing areas of a number of high schools with the mainframe at the administration building. Since data service is free to the school district, the switch from telephone lines to broadband cable will result in a significant cost savings, as well.

New construction will address the promise of technology. The teacher's desk is giving way to teacher learning centers, complete with a computer and the ability to access information from data bases across the country. Dallas' administrators are currently investigating ways to provide today's student with the skills and tools necessary to function in the anticipated technologically-advanced society of the 21st century.

One of the major problems all large city school districts share is public relations. Lack of good communications between the school and the community often results in misunderstandings. A key to improving communication and providing an ongoing information source has been the development of the school district's award-winning Channel 2. Operated by the newly-created Cable Communications Department, the channel carries informational and instructional programming from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week. Over 75,000 Dallas citizens on the Heritage Cablevision system receive current information about what is going on in "their" schools.

The programming ranges from "School Zone," a one-half hour biweekly show designed to provide viewers with an in-depth, on-site look at individual schools, to the "Report Card," a magazine show that highlights events such as a walk-a-thon and a recent visit by the governor's wife to one of the schools.

Perhaps the biggest hit on Channel 2 is the DISD sports programming. Produced in cooperation with Heritage Cablevision's local origination staff, weekly football,

basketball, baseball, track and field events are extremely popular and enjoy large audiences.

Staff development on Channel 2 allows teachers the convenience of on-site instruction with the ability to review the material in the convenience of their home. Meanwhile parents are able to watch and better understand some of the curriculum matters being addressed by the district. For example, when the new grading and reporting system was explained to principals, parents were given the same information on Channel 2. News about the revised instructional plans also went directly into Dallas homes exactly as it was transmitted to administrators.

"DISD Today," a program produced jointly with the PTA, provides parents and citizens information of current interest regarding the state of education in the DISD, and throughout the nation. Local and national education leaders have a forum to discuss issues and inform parents and citizens about crucial decisions affecting their children and their tax dollars. Other Channel 2-produced programming includes "Charlas Escolares," an award-winning Spanish language program, designed to provide information to the Hispanic community, and "Drugs and You," which gives viewers information about drug-related support programs.

Although the future looks bright in Dallas for cable, there is still a great deal of work to be completed. We must address the problem of networking the myriad of computers and word processors the district already owns. We also need additional funding to obtain an ample number of modems.

The increased load of yet one more responsibility—that of administrating and implementing a telecommunications network that will span over 351 square miles, serve over 131,000 students and a staff of 14,000—is awesome. Yet, Dallas is excited. Officials at both the school district and Heritage Cablevision are optimistic about an even brighter future.

Diana Braiden Radspinner is the Cable Communication Specialist for the Dallas Independent School District.

NFLCP Is Looking For A Few Old Folks

NFLCP will be celebrating its tenth anniversary at the national convention next summer. The Tenth Anniversary Hijinks Committee is looking for old NFLCP members and access folks who were around in 1976 when this organization was born. We hope to get as many community programming veterans as we can to attend the 1986 NFLCP National Convention in San Francisco in July, and the committee is planning some special activities and surprises for them and for you!

If you know the whereabouts of any of these venerable individuals, please let the committee know by calling or writing:

Dave Bloch (916) 757-2419
Davis Community Cable
1605 2nd Street
Davis, CA 95616

How do you know if a particular individual is a real NFLCP or access veteran? Look for these clues:

1. They can thread a Sony AV-3400 portapak.
2. They think "1/2-inch" refers to open-reel videotape.
3. They have all the back issues of RADICAL SOFTWARE magazine on their bookshelves.
4. The only TV they watch is David Letterman, and claim loudly that this is the ONLY way to do TV!

5. They have closets full of old T-shirts from hole-in-the-wall access centers (and NFLCP conventions).

6. Their current field of interest is worldwide networking through the bicycling of videotapes.

7. They can spell Sue Bednarczyk's name.

WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR old 1/2-inch and defunct-format 1-inch access programming, and machines to play them on. **WE KNOW** that there are some beautifully-preserved specimens on equipment and programming out there—here's your chance to help us find it and create an archive for it!

The Ten-Year Anniversary needs your help in gathering all of this together. Please don't delay—clean your closets today!

THE HISTORY OF ACCESS: It's All In Your Head...

C'mon, talk to us . . . for the past ten years all you NFLCP members (and those who have gone before you) have sweated and strained, watering those grass roots to make community television happen in a big way. Don't you think it's time to take a little break, pat yourselves on the back, and have a little fun?

Next summer, NFLCP will be celebrating its tenth anniversary at the national convention. Therefore, we are planning a special issue of the *Community Television Review* that will focus on the history of NFLCP and community programming.

You can help *CTR* celebrate NFLCP's 10TH ANNIVERSARY by contributing to this very special issue.

We'd like to publish your best anecdotes, limericks, one-liners, sentimental recollections, and truth-is-stranger-than-fiction stories in the upcoming *CTR* anniversary issue, because it's time we had our *own* "oral history" project!!

All you have to do is:

- 1) relax for a moment and put your feet up;
- 2) think back to when you first got interested in community television (time flies, doesn't it?), and remember all the people, places, portapaks, and programs you've experienced since; and
- 3) drop us a few lines (postcards accepted) about:
 - what it was like in the "old" days (just think how equipment has changed, not to mention hairstyles!);
 - the most unforgettable access program you ever saw/did;
 - your all-time favorite access programmer/volunteer;
 - an experience that made you believe all your hard work was worth it;
 - what it was (experience, person) that got you all fired up about local programming in the first place;
 - or anything else.

The wheels are already starting to turn, aren't they? Well, find a stamp and mail your fragment of history off to:

"I REMEMBER WHEN . . ." NFLCP 906 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. Washington, DC 20003

Start Small—Plan Big

By Jane McKinney

Eight and a half years ago, I conducted a session on educational uses of cable television at a national association seminar. Five people attended. This past summer I conducted a similar session for the same association. There was standing room only in a room designed to hold 60-75 people.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, cable television companies moved into most areas of the country and promised to provide many communities a complete telecommunications delivery system. Schools were promised channels, studios, equipment, and personnel. In many instances, they received all these things. And in too many instances, they haven't known what to do with it.

After 10 years of experience in developing and supervising the cable operation for the East Lansing Public School District, and after years of working with other school districts, I'm convinced that circumstances forced East Lansing to go in the only possible direction. *Circumstances forced us to start small and plan big.*

We had no model to follow—we were the pioneers. We had only a character generator the cable commission gave us, a borrowed portapak, and me. Of necessity, our beginnings were small. Only our plans were big.

Our plans called for: a full-color studio in the high school; a cable coordinator responsible for the studio, equipment, and programming; a high school teacher specifically trained in television production; high school classes in beginning and advanced television production; workshops for middle school students; involvement of elementary students in production; training sessions for teachers; and quality programming in information, in-service, and instruction.

When we celebrate our tenth anniversary in February, 1986, we can say these plans have become reality.

But we started small. We began with the printed information pages and added programming as we could. We kept our productions simple. We concentrated on information programs, because they are the

easiest and build support the fastest. When we felt competent and in control of that area, we moved on to in-service. We left instruction for last because that is the most difficult.

Information

A cable channel is an ideal information tool for schools because it provides direct, instant, and continual communication with the public.

The character generator, which transmits the printed information pages onto the screen, is a basic piece of equipment. A few tips about selecting it: the type should be large enough to read easily but not so large that little will fit on the page at one time; the machine should have a built-in battery so that a surge in electricity won't erase the messages; it should take a modem hookup for relaying important messages from home, such as, "No school today because of snow!"

The printed information messages are as important as the school district chooses to make them. Fill the pages with trivia

and no one will bother to watch. Make important announcements that are timely and relevant, and viewers grow to depend on the channel as a reliable source of information.

In East Lansing, all important school announcements are made *first* on the district's Cable Channel 24. Viewers know that. For example, in our current search for a new superintendent, each new development is printed first on the channel, then distributed to the media. The same was true when we went through closing two elementary schools two years ago. It's paid off.

When parents were asked in a June, 1984, survey what source of school information they considered most reliable, 98 percent of high school parents listed the district's Cable Channel 24 first; 95 percent of middle school parents listed it second; and 95 percent of elementary parents listed it fourth.

They can count on accurate, up-to-the-minute information on the printed pages which run continually, except when there



Students engaged in production at the East Lansing Public Schools.

is programming. They know there will be programming from 7-9 p.m. every week night and that it will be relevant, timely, and in some cases, live. All of that builds credibility.

We also give our viewers what they want to see. Our surveys tell us they prefer programs about (1) students—what they're learning, how they're learning it, and who they're learning it from; (2) school activities in arts and athletics; and (3) Board of Education policies and actions that directly affect students and the community in general.

In the beginning, we depended on ready-made programs throughout the district that could be videotaped with one camera and shown without editing. For example, we would tape special programs that elementary classes often present to parents, such as an experiment in science class or a "book bowl" contest.

Original programming came next, but simplicity was still the key. Our first original program, "Viewpoint," also became our first regular program. It was a weekly interview with the superintendent that continued for eight years, ending only when the superintendent moved to another district. It was done with a portapak at the beginning, but eventually became a three-camera production in the studio. It had a large following because the topics were timely, sometimes controversial, always relevant, and the superintendent was direct, honest, and open.

From the beginning, we've shown the Board of Education meetings live, first with borrowed equipment and personnel from the cable company. Later, the productions became a learning experience for our students. Out June, 1984 survey showed that 68 percent of our parents watched the meetings regularly. Of course, that was the year of school closings!

As our expertise and resources grew, we began to tackle more complex productions. Along with this, an increasing number of teachers have become interested in using cable TV, not only as a way to reaffirm that's being taught in the classroom, but also as a way to share this with parents. They've come up with some creative ideas.

For example, one fifth grade class produced a news documentary as a way of reporting what they were studying. They wrote a script which described activities in social studies, math, science and language arts. They selected an "anchor" and reporters for each area. They designed the set in art class, performed a dance they

learned in physical education class, and ended the program with a song they learned in music class. What a unique and effective way to integrate instruction!

When copyright laws allow it, we show complete plays and concerts. Otherwise, we videotape segments and work them into a news or interview program. We also videotape one event in each sport each season. In this way, we achieve a balance in our three A's: academics, arts, athletics.

To round out our programming, we produce shows on school district elections, curriculum changes, school finances, and the always popular human interest story. These are usually interviews or narratives with action inserts.

In-service

Cable television is a creative, effective way to provide professional development for staff. A library of brief in-service videotapes allows staff members to get information at the time they need it, in an easily accessible way.

Our first experiments with producing in-service programs were simple. A teacher with a particular skill, such as classroom management, would sit in front of the camera and explain the techniques he or she used. Then the camera would zoom into the classroom and show what the teacher was describing.

As interest in using cable TV for in-service grew, we videotaped the workshops or presentations which the district brought in as a part of the professional development program. These were then edited to a reasonable length.

Because of what we were doing, we were able to get state funds to continue our in-service programming efforts. We interviewed our teachers to determine the topics they felt should be covered. The topics were assigned to teams of teachers who had volunteered to work on the project. Each team researched a topic, wrote the script, and chose the people to appear before the camera. These teachers were quick to say they benefitted much more than those who simply viewed the finished product.

Periodically, when we have several new in-service videotapes, we'll promote a two-week "preview time" and show these before school, after school, and during lunch periods. Principals often request that specific videotapes be shown during staff meetings. Individual teachers also request particular ones as a follow-up to their evaluations.

It takes time for teachers and adminis-

trators to become accustomed to using cable TV for in-service training. But once they do, they say it adds a convenient, worthwhile dimension to professional development.

Instruction

For instructional television to be effective, there must be quality programming available and teachers must be trained in how to use it properly.

As a result, it's been almost impossible for a school district to adequately develop this aspect of its cable operation until recently. Public broadcasting systems increasingly produce excellent programs on numerous subjects for every grade level. Many of these can be taped off the air and used in the schools for a specified period of time.

In addition, many state departments of education across the country are doing what Michigan has done. That is, they provide funds for (1) buying the rights for school districts to use instructional programs via satellite, either directly or to videotape for later use; and (2) training teachers how to use instructional television properly.

Last year, East Lansing was part of a six-district consortium receiving a state grant to carry out these two goals. Three districts are with one cable company and can receive Lansing School District's channel. The other three are served by another cable company and can receive East Lansing's channel. An interconnect installed by the cable companies make it possible for all six districts to receive programming out of Lansing. With its satellite dish, Lansing brings in the state-purchased instructional programming.

The project offers training sessions for teachers on how to integrate the videotapes into the curriculum. There is a growing demand among teachers for participation in the workshops.

As committees in our district look at revising and developing curriculum, they now include the use of instructional videotapes as an integral part of the curriculum.

In a different kind of cooperative effort, three districts are now looking at the feasibility of a two-way cable connection for sharing classes too costly for any one district to offer individually. This won't happen right away, but it's not too far down the road.

And who's to know that's to come after that?

Jane McKinney is the director of information for East Lansing Public Schools.

Survey Identifies Cable Utilization Trends In Higher Education

By Robert G. McCartney

According to a nationwide survey conducted by the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), the availability of cable access channels has allowed colleges and universities to rapidly expand their use of telecommunications technology. UTA's study, which is composed of responses from nearly 200 post-secondary institutions, constructs a comprehensive picture of how cable is used by institutions of higher education.

The survey shows that educational institutions can operate access channels with minimal resources. It was found that 65 percent of the respondents operate on an annual budget of \$50,000 or less, including salaries. In addition, 75 percent have fewer than five full-time employees. More than half of the respondents reported that the majority of their production work was done with student participation.

An initial hypothesis of the survey was that most college cable operations have not been in business for very long. This assumption proved wrong. We found that 34 percent have been operating for seven years or more. For example, Ithaca College in upstate New York, reported that it has been cablecasting parades, and other local programming since at least 1958. Marietta College in Ohio began its regular, continuous cable programming schedule in 1969. However, there is also a large group (42 percent) which started cablecasting in the last two years.

The study revealed that among post-secondary educational cable users, there is an even split between telecourse programming and general programming targeted to a student and/or a community audience. The use of cable as a laboratory for students studying television production/performance was reported by about one third of the respondents (most of this is general programming).

According to the survey, programming on post-secondary educational channels is concentrated in the afternoons and evenings. Most of the programming is cablecast between 6 p.m. and 12 a.m. We found that 36 percent cablecast ten or fewer hours per week, while a surprising 28 percent provide 50 hours or more per

Cable Utilization In Institutions Of Higher Education

Annual Operating Budget

Less Than \$10,000	29.73%
\$10,001-\$20,000	12.61%
\$20,001-\$50,000	16.22%
\$50,001-\$100,000	11.71%
Over \$100,000	13.51%
Missing	16.22%

Number of Professional Staff

Less than 5	66.67%
6-10	16.23%
11-15	0.9%
16-20	1.8%
Over 20	3.6%
Missing	10.8%

Years of Operation

Less than 2 years	19.82%
2-4 years	37.83%
5-6 years	11.71%
7-8 years	9.01%
Over 8 years	21.63%

Hours Of Programming

	Classes in Session	Classes Not in Session
Less than 10 Hours	36.03%	49.55%
11-20 hours	15.31%	11.71%
21-40 hours	16.22%	12.62%
41-50 hours	3.61%	3.6%
Over 50 hours	28.83%	16.21%
Missing	—	6.3%

Cable Utilization In Institutions Of Higher Education

Percentage of Productions Undertaken With Student Participation

Amount of Student Participation	Percentage of Respondents
0-25%	24.32%
26-50%	5.40%
51-75%	12.62%
76-100%	57.66%

Amount of Local Programming

Amount of Local Programming	Percentage of Respondents
None	5.4 %
1%-25%	37.84%
26%-50%	11.71%
51%-99%	17.12%
100%	27.93%

Average Number of Replays

0-2	56.76%
3-4	31.53%
5-6	3.57%
Over 6	1.81%

week. There are also several 24 hour operations. Those centers that are in operation for large blocks of time utilize some interesting combinations of outside program materials. The Learning Channel, Campus Network, credit courses, and programs from other colleges and universities are interprogrammed with local productions. One respondent even cuts to C-SPAN to cover all non-local programming hours.

The mix of locally produced and imported programming varies widely among our respondents. Nearly 28 percent have

all locally produced programs. These operations have the least amount of programming per week. In addition, 38 percent reported up to 25 percent locally produced programming.

The most common local programming formats on these channels are news, sports, talk shows, and telecourses. There are also lectures, seminars, "how to" demonstrations, teleconferences, and documentaries.

We found that most of the operations (87 percent) replay programs one to four times, extending their viewership and pro-

gramming hours. A few have more than four replays a week.

It was disappointing to find that 84 percent of the operations did not have research figures on viewership among their own students. We surmised that the time or resources are just not available to do comprehensive statistical work. However, one station did report that there was a little old lady from the community with blue hair who called them regularly to comment on their taste in programming.

Though most operations were not supervised directly by an academic department, a number of facilities are shared with lab courses. Half of the operations have five or fewer cameras, but almost all reported broadcast or high-end industrial equipment. Nearly two-thirds said they have ten or more VTRs, almost exclusively in the ¾ inch VCR format, though one-half inch equipment was also available at most locations.

This survey has aroused a great deal of interest among post-secondary educational users of cable. The response from the participants in this survey (there was considerable phone and mail reaction) indicates a great deal of interest, but little knowledge of what others in this field are doing. UTA received many requests, not only for the results of the survey, but also for copies of organizational procedures from the UTA operation, and copies of the survey mailing list.

The NFLCP, the Cable Television Information Center, Knowledge Industries Publications, Campus Network, and the National League of Cities have all followed the results of the study very carefully. In addition, 43 individual institutions have expressed an interest in forming a special interest group of institutions of higher education within the NFLCP.

Robert G. McCartney is a professor of communications at the University of Texas at Arlington, and was formerly UTA's director of instructional television services. UTA's curriculum includes upper level courses in cable operations and alternate media.

College News Show Has An Impact

By Anne Landers

"Don't expect to keep your job if I get re-elected," I heard from across the room as I sat down to lunch at an eatery frequented by cable television staff and county employees. "Great," I thought. "Two kids in college, 19 months left to pay on my car, and I'm going to be out of work. What on earth is the County Chairman upset about?"

Roundabout

"The News," as it came to be called, had its roots in the earliest days of our community television facility. It began with a student reporter, whose assignment was to write about the programming from Prime Cable's Community Channel 12. Enthusiastic about what she learned, Brett, the reporter, asked if we could offer her an internship for academic credit, and she became our first college intern. David, a junior in the Business School at Emory University followed soon after. Together, they wanted to produce a weekly magazine program highlighting community activities of interest to college students. They gathered a crew of 19 college students with energy, talent, and enthusiasm. We agreed to teach the crew, and *Roundabout*, a weekly, 30-minute program, began. It was clever and fast-paced. David and Brett had recruited the crew for their skills and everyone added something to the program. The student photographer became the segment producer. Two journalism students wrote the program copy and weekly press releases for student and community newspapers. David and Brett were the on-camera talent. They hosted the program from a variety of locations the students would recognize: the student post office, the gym, and the quick-copy shop across from the campus. The segments included restaurant and movie reviews, fashion updates, concert listings and a calendar of community events. Everywhere the *Roundabout* crew went with their cameras, they stirred up interest in the "television for credit" internships. Over the next three months the crew and the program got better and better.

But the semester ended and the Christmas holidays arrived; school was out, and the *Roundabout* crew disbanded. Programming from the college students was gone, but not forgotten.

Impact News

Early in the Christmas holidays, David called from his home in New York; he wanted to discuss his Senior Project. He informed me that before he could graduate from the business school, he must, "design and execute a management project, directing groups of people through a specific tasks to defined goal." In other words, David wanted to produce another television program. This time he wanted to try "hard" news. The community television staff understood the demands that a news program can make on equipment, time and staff. But, we also knew that David had the skill and determination to take on a project of this difficulty. He had access to a large pool of trained interns and the support of the college faculty. We agreed to his proposal, and *Impact News* was scheduled for January.

In the beginning, the format for the weekly, 30-minute, news program was primarily "rip and read." Copy was gathered from regional and business newspapers. The program was taped in the studio on Friday and aired twice daily on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. It had only two on-location segments. Brett did not work on *Impact News*. She was replaced in the co-producer role by Jim, the photographer/segment producer from *Roundabout*. Our college internship program had grown to 25 students, most of whom were working on the news program.

Word spread through the college grapevine, and students from other universities wanted to bring their skills to the program. A young sports writer wanted to cover the area's high school teams. So many young people wanted to become the "anchor persons" that auditions were held. Applicants had to write their own copy from information provided from the newspaper, then read it on tape, and do

"intros" and "outros" to a selected segment. Three of the seven finalists were selected for the program.

As we all knew, producing the news was much harder than producing an entertainment program. The producers needed features which would help develop the audience and give the program credibility.

The students approached the Chamber of Commerce and asked it the Chamber wanted to include a weekly report on business activities in the community. The Chamber was delighted to participate and provided a five-minute business report written by their publicity chairman. A special announcement went out to 1,500 Chamber members, encouraging them to watch *Impact News*.

On the political front, election time was near and candidates began to announce for the elections. Our reputation was beginning to spread, and many candidates called and asked to be interviewed. Community members and local print reporters began to contribute news tips.

Summer came and school was finished, but this time the program did not die. Although David graduated, Jim planned to continue the program. He decided to stay in Atlanta and produce the program through the summer. Jon, a philosophy student, became the new co-producer. He and Jim approached their new connections at the Chamber of Commerce for suggestions on how to fund themselves as producers during the summer. The Chamber suggested that one of its members, who owned an executive lodging complex, might help. They were right. She offered a suite of housekeeping rooms to the two producers for the summer. Next, they went to the friendly producer of a broadcast news program for suggestions on fundraising. He gave them an introduction to a pub owner in the neighborhood of the campus; the pub owner donated \$200 and pledged to have nine friends pitch in a matching amount. A national fast food chain offered to feed the two young men for the summer months, and Emory University, the academic home of a large part of the crew, voted the students a \$1,000 grant to defray the cost of pro-

duction expenses. After a two-week break for college finals, the program was back, revitalized and better. Because it now had so many experienced crew members to draw on, the co-producers decided to "take it to the streets" with more location footage and a new name. The program was now called *NewsWatch*.

NewsWatch

One of the mainstays of our community television teaching program is a weekly critiquing session called "quarterbacking." In these classes, small segments of all the programs produced that week are screened and discussed. All interns, directors, and producers currently working on programs are required to attend. The community television staff does the critiquing and encourages constructive comments from the audience. Often they invite video professionals to be the guest "quarterback." That gives volunteers a chance to network with professionals and get instant feedback on their newest efforts. Over the six months, *NewsWatch* benefited from the quarterbacking advice of several news professionals. Nadine, the former anchor of a suburban Chicago news program (and former Hometown Video Festival winner), stopped in to be the guest quarterback while house-hunting in Atlanta. Later, when she relocated to the area, she became the volunteer assistant producer for *NewsWatch*. With Nadine's help, *NewsWatch* evolved to its most professional form. Five field crews were established, each with a reporter, camera-person and gaffer. One field crew was to be on call each day. County Commission and school board meetings were covered each week. Other crews were available for late-breaking stories and soft news stories. All copy was written by the reporting staff and approved by Nadine and Jim; deadline for the copy was Thursday evening at 6:00 p.m. Field segments were to be edited by Friday noon; the program was taped as though "live" in the studio on Friday afternoon. It was cablecast twice daily, Sunday through Wednesday.

Producing the news did more for the students than teaching them video journalism; it got them involved in community issues. Not long out of high school themselves, the *NewsWatch* crew became interested in the problem of re-districting the local high schools. They did lengthy and insightful interviews with students, parents, and school board members. *NewsWatch* provided the most comprehensive coverage of this issue given by any community media.

A local judge, running for re-election and charged with several instances of drunk driving, called the *NewsWatch* crew to ask if he could use the Prime Cable studio to announce his resignation from the race.

The County Chairman began to watch *NewsWatch*. At election time, the students ran a segment featuring the Chairman and his challenger. The Chairman apparently felt he was poorly lit, making him "look like a gangster," which spurred his comments (in the first paragraph of this article) from across the restaurant to the author of this article. Of course, when he won the race, all was forgiven, and he thanked us for the coverage we had provided him.

We were beginning to attract attention on many fronts. Another official running for re-election, asked the citizen advisory board to look into the appropriateness of a news program produced by community television interns. He questioned whether "... volunteers, with no proven journalism skills," could accurately report the news.

All the controversy was wonderful. It proved there was an audience for the program and made it clear to everyone how important television, and especially television news, could be to a community. It was a lesson in ethics, values and time management that the students couldn't have learned anywhere else.

The News Retires

After six hectic months, "The News" retired. Actually, it graduated. Within

four months, Jim, the producer, graduated from college and went to Italy to study film making; Nadine accepted a position as the assignment editor for an Atlanta broadcast news channel; three of the news anchors went to small market television stations as reporters, and Brett, the catalyst for our community news program, went to CNN as a production assistant.

No one has tried to revive *NewsWatch*. It was a hard act to follow. The amount of work that was required is more than other volunteers have been willing to contribute. The internship program has been reduced from 25 students to ten. That was a hard decision. After two years experience with students, we knew two things. First, they could be counted on for good, hard, work during the period of their internship. Second, they usually did not continue as volunteers when their internship ended: they moved on to put roots down elsewhere.

Because the amount of staff time that can be devoted to teaching is limited, it has become our first priority to teach community members, with roots in the county. We still value and depend upon our interns and our relationship to the colleges. One of our current staff members began his experience with Prime Cable as an intern on *Impact News*. Probably the best video short produced in the last six months was done by a junior high school teacher using his entire class as the cast. The teacher began with us as a college intern.

We are trying to balance the needs of the student community with the needs of the rest of the community. And we're still learning how to do that.

Anne Landers is the director of Community Television for Prime Cable in Decatur, Georgia.

An Ideal Marriage: Access and De Anza College

By Eliot Margolies

Putting aside all the high-tech trappings associated with cable TV, video, and the Silicon Valley itself, one can almost visualize the Cupertino arrangement as an "old world" marriage.

In this metaphor, picture De Anza College as the astute landowner, well known and respected in the community. Enter United Cable Company, an equally astute merchant, desiring the set roots in Cupertino, but rather taken aback by the cost of land in the area. The city elders step forward with a bold proposal. Why not a marriage between the clever, but thin son of the college—the De Anza TV Department, and the young ward of United Cable—Community Channel 3?

Channel 3's dowry was nothing to sneeze at: a fully equipped studio, two portapaks, an edit suite, and money enough to hire a full-time overseer for the assets. So, a marriage document was quickly prepared and Channel 3 found a home on the De Anza College lands.

The bridegroom and bride shared many interests, but like all the young newlyweds of those days, they had a lot to learn about each other. The relationship demanded a lot of give and take. But with the hard

work required in those days—from sunup til well past sunset—it was not long before strong links were foreged, out of mutual respect and necessity, if not the seeds of love itself.

Spend a day at the De Anza TV Center and you're likely to see the familiar pandemonium of any access center. The phone rings off the hook. A steady stream of people come through the open sliding glass door with a multitude of requests, propositions, and crises. A long string of meetings, consultations, and calls, will thread together my day as access director. The difference is that our access center is interwoven with an academic TV department, and many of the people I go to for assistance are college employees, rather than community volunteers or cable company staff. That includes the cablecasters and studio techs (student employees), the television center dean, instructors, the chief engineer, and the secretary. All these individuals share responsibilities for access operations, even though I'm the only one whose entire job is dedicated to Channel 3.

Another conspicuous difference is the number of students scurrying between the

control room and studio throughout the daytime class hours. My own involvement with students is substantial, ranging from actual instruction of Channel 3 interns learning to produce "mini-docs" on community issues, to co-ventures with the Film/TV student club for special events and speakers.

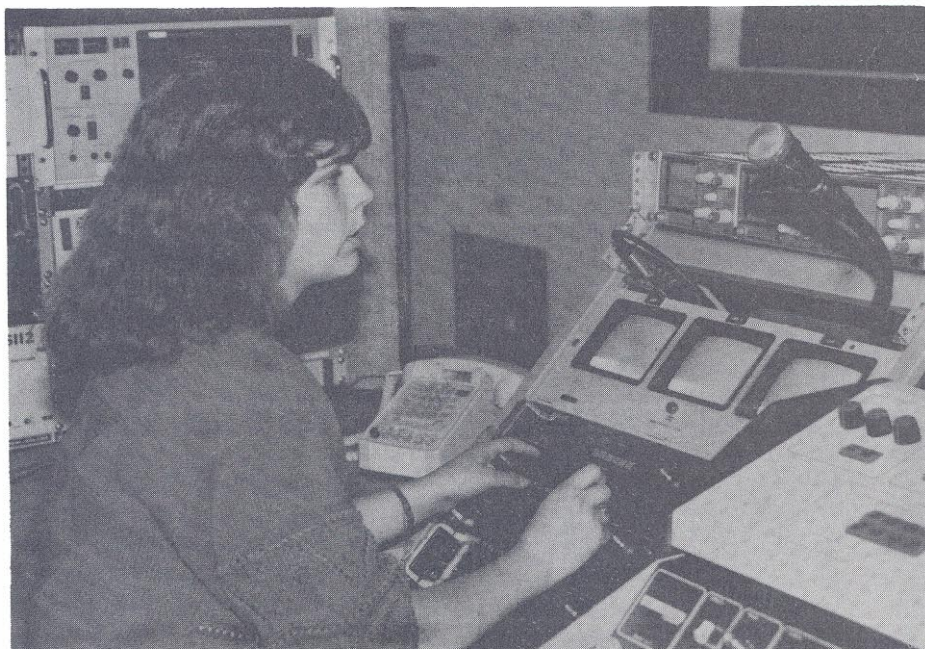
The additional resources—human and technological—that come to Channel 3 by virtue of its relationship with De Anza College are substantial. Many other communities are now beginning to examine this unique three-way relationship between cable company, city, and college, and one senses that this type of arrangement will become increasingly common. The cable company provides the equipment. The college manages the access operations. And the city sets access policies and administers the franchise fee revenues.

While each party has grumbled from time to time about unexpected gaps between theory and practice, it appears, at this point, that overall, everyone considers the arrangement advantageous.

United is pleased with the arrangement because it has reduced costs associated with managing the facility. The company was also pleased to find that it was much less expensive for them to convert the De Anza theater building into a studio. Without this opportunity United would have had to purchase land (in a high-cost area) and construct a building from scratch. In addition, De Anza agreed to provide United the land it needed to place its satellite dishes.

The perks for De Anza College are substantial as well. Under the agreement, De Anza has access to a high end television studio and video equipment that would not have been otherwise affordable to the school. Therefore, students receive hands-on experience with state of the art industrial equipment, and this is crucial to the schools' video curriculum.

Having the access center on campus is also prestigious, since De Anza Community College is associated with the accomplishments of Cupertino Community Television. For example, the school received local and national recognition when



In the control room at Cupertino Community Television. By Marni Burlingame.

Cupertino Community Television had five finalists and two winners in the 1985 Hometown USA Video Festival.

With a cable channel right on campus, De Anza is offered a significant public relations opportunity. And the school takes advantage of this opportunity by producing two regular series programs about De Anza Community College.

"Becoming involved with access and becoming the communications center for the community is consistent with the mission of this college," says Television Dean Mike Holler. "The college was already the home for Cupertino's planetarium, the California History Center and the Southbay's largest performing arts facility—Flint Center. Cupertino Community Television reaffirms the notion that De Anza College is a community center, and it brings large numbers of potential students onto campus."

Most important of all, however, is that this marriage is good for public access. By being housed at De Anza College, which one could argue is Cupertino's focal point, access enjoys high visibility. For example, when the college sponsors major events like "De Anza Day," 40,000 people descend on the campus, providing Channel 3 substantial publicity.

The additional staff support available through the college is also an important resource. The television department's chief engineer, Dave Massey, performs day-to-day maintenance on all of the equipment that is jointly used by the school and the access center. Usually, a piece of equipment that goes down is back up within a day. According to the contract, we could send the access equipment to United for maintenance, but we rarely do, given the turn around time.

The instructors within the television department are also an important resource. They have all (along with Dave Massey) served as consultants on access shoots. Mike Holler, a former theater technician, built our set risers. We've also received assistance from woodshop, photography and film instructors.

In addition, the secretary of the television department (also an access producer) spends one-third of her time on access operations. And the school employs about eight students to cablecast the programming, check portapaks in and out, and provide technical support in the studio.

The trick is to keep everyone aware of the good deal they have whenever we hit an inevitable snag. The job of internal relations is an integral part of my role as

access director, in that I am an employee of the college, an advocate for the city, and a liaison to the cable company. Just as it would be a mistake for any non-profit *not* to undertake efforts to justify and promote itself to the city government that underwrites it, so too would it be foolish to take the school support for granted in this situation. Along with community outreach, publicity, equipment training, and administrative duties, I give equal importance to the goal of building interdependence between Channel 3 and United Cable. Inevitably, there will arise ambiguities in the contract, or new situations that the contract did not anticipate, and times of budget tightening. That is when it becomes especially important to have interlinked each other's welfare, and to have cultivated an environment of mutual trust and pride.

Recently, Cupertino's neighbor to the north, Los Altos, awarded its franchise to United and chose to house its access center

at Foothill Community College. If the communities desire, we'll be able to interconnect our community channels, double our programming hours from 15 to 30 hours per week, and double our potential audience from 5,000 to 10,000 subscriber households. This would add one more layer to the already multi-faceted relationship.

On January 17, 1986, Cupertino Channel 3 will celebrate its third annual awards night. City officials, De Anza College administrators, and United Cable managers will sit together and enjoy the best of our programming. Everyone will toast the 50 or so producers, and the 300 or so crewmembers who produced programs in the past year. On that night the rewards of this exciting Silicon Valley marriage will be written on every face there.

Eliot Margolies is director of public access for Cupertino Community Television.



Access crewmember adjusts microphone prior to taping a production at Cupertino Community Television. By Marni Burlingame.

Instructional Television: Meeting The Needs of The Adult Learner

By Ron Brey

The emergence of the "adult learner" is one of the most significant developments in postsecondary education over the past twenty years. The most common characteristic of adult learners, or non-traditional students as they are also known, is that they are older than the typical college student.

Changes in the economy and industrial technologies have resulted in a rapidly increasing number of older students pursuing a postsecondary education. There are several reasons for this increase. First, an Associate Degree is now often a requirement for today's work force. This has encouraged many people to go to college for the first time, even though it may have been many years since they last attended a school. Second, the shift of the national economy from heavy industry to services and light industry (such as electronics) has resulted in the need for job retraining. Finally, many people have discovered that new skills are required in order to retain their current jobs.

For many adult learners, the traditional mode of college instruction (students attending an on-campus class on a scheduled basis) is very inconvenient and often impossible. Therefore, colleges have taken steps to reach distant learners. In some cases, post-secondary institutions offer classroom instruction throughout the service area—within local business offices, government agencies, and industrial sites. In addition, instruction is often brought to the adult learner at home. This is often accomplished through extension programs, independent study, and increasingly by telecommunications systems.

Telecourses

Telecourses have been offered by colleges for about thirty years. And they have changed dramatically over the years. The original telecourse was simply a recorded "talking head." Today's telecourse is a sophisticated production with about twenty-six half hour video programs, a textbook, a study guide and an instructor's manual. Such a telecourse often costs more than one million dollars to produce.

Initially, telecourses were delivered to students via broadcast television, with each program shown only once a week. Students were still forced to schedule their viewing around the broadcast time, even though the home was the classroom. However, as cable television became widespread during the 1970s, it became an effective and low-cost alternative to broadcast television. Cable TV provided the opportunity for multiple cablecasts at better viewing times.

Although data has not been collected nationally, the number of colleges offering telecourses is well over 500, with annual enrollments in the hundreds of thousands.

Telecourses And The Adult Learner

Do telecourses meet the need of the adult learner? This was one of the basic questions for a research project undertaken during the 1984 spring semester by the Instructional Telecommunications Consortium of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. The project was funded by a grant from The Annenberg/CPB Project. The final report, *Telecourse Student Survey 1984*, contains data from over 7,000 telecourse students from community colleges throughout the United States. These data clearly show that telecourses appeal to adult learners: the students are older than average (44 percent are 30 or older), likely to be women (68 percent), have dependents (55 percent), employed (81 percent) and want to view the programs at home (67 percent). The study also reported that the major reason why 41 percent of the respondents enrolled in a telecourse is because campus classes conflicted with the person's work schedule.

Cable Television And The Telecourse Student

The relative importance of cable television for a college's telecourse program depends upon a number of factors: the exis-

tence and extent of cable in the college's service area, the availability of programming time, and, in some cases, the existence of monetary support from the cable company or city.

The experiences of Austin Community College exemplify the role that cable television can play in meeting the needs of the adult learner. During the 1985 fall semester, 20 telecourses were offered with a total enrollment of 1169. The college cable channel carried 19 courses. Each program was cablecast several times during the week. In addition, six telecourses were broadcast on the local PBS station. All telecourse programs could also be viewed in at least one college library and five public library branches. Most ACC students could subscribe to Austin Cable-Vision, and a majority did so.

At the beginning of the semester, approximately two-thirds of the students indicated that they intended to watch all the programs at home. However, data obtained at the end of the semester indicate that only two-thirds of the students viewed the programs at home, with an equal number watching programs in the library. Libraries were used to view programs shown during a week when they may have been out of town, or to review material before an examination. Thus, a variety of viewing options are needed to meet student needs.

Clearly, cable television is already a vital component of colleges' telecourse programs. As additional telecourses are produced for national distribution, it will become even more important, especially if time on PBS stations becomes increasingly limited, and additional broadcast fees must be paid.

Future Applications Of Cable Television By Colleges

Numerous telecommunications systems are being developed that can be used to reach the adult learner. Although some are very costly when compared to cable television, these costs will, in some cases, be reduced significantly in the near future.

These alternatives include: Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS), point to point microwave, telephone line based audio teleconferencing, electronic mail, slow scan video, satellite video teleconferencing, and direct broadcast satellite systems. However, cable will probably remain the single most important telecommunications system used by colleges to deliver instruction to the adult learner at off-campus sites.

The number of students enrolling in prerecorded telecourses, and who will view the programs on cable television, will continue to expand steadily. This will be due to a number of factors: the number of homes capable of subscribing to cable will continue to increase; more channels will be available to colleges as older systems are rebuilt; and the production of new telecourses will bring in more students. All these trends will encourage additional colleges to offer telecourses over cable television systems.

Colleges will also begin to make applications of newer features of cable television technology. Two will have particular significance for the adult learner: institutional networks and addressable channels. Both are particularly well suited for live televised instruction, which would make it possible to offer most credit and non-credit courses to off-campus sites.

A number of cities have in place, or are constructing, institutional networks. Certain channels may be made available to colleges for live instruction to a wide variety of off-campus sites passed by the network. The attraction of this system to colleges will vary from community to community, depending upon the number of channels, the extent of the institutional network, and the availability of funding. In many cases, it will be used in conjunction with other systems such as ITFS.

Addressable channels will permit colleges to offer a greater variety of televised instruction, prerecorded and live, than would be possible over a subscriber channel. Programming for special groups, such as those in the medical profession, would be appropriate over an addressable channel.

By using an addressable channel, people would register and be billed for non-credit courses just by using their cable system and a touch pad, or in some cases, their telephone. Although colleges may be required to pay a fee to the cable company for this service, it will prove to be a viable addition to the traditional prerecorded telecourse.

Cable television is relied upon by many colleges as an important method of reaching the adult learner. Its applications and enrollments will continue to expand. However, as additional telecommunications delivery systems become available, cable will become a part of a college's

overall use of telecommunications for instruction, with each part designed to reach different segments of the adult learner population.

Ron Brey is coordinator for non-traditional instruction at Austin Community College.

MUNICIPAL PROGRAMMING SHOWCASE

The NFLCP now presents a 30 minute sampler tape of some of the best municipal programming available. Programs covering different topics and formats from all across the country are featured. If you wish to buy or rent this tape, please fill out this form.

- ☐ Yes, I want to buy "Municipal Programming Showcase." Enclosed please find a check for \$100.
- ☐ Yes, I want to rent "Municipal Programming Showcase." Enclosed please find a check for \$40 to cover the price of a 7 day rental.

Name _____ Organization _____

Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Telephone _____

Make check payable to NFLCP

Make Way For College Television

By Andrea Taylor

In the beginning, there was the college newspaper. It contained campus news, a voice for campus gripes, and a central place for listing events.

Then came college radio. The music was provided free, and start up costs were relatively low. It was only necessary to provide a student DJ, and viola, the whole school was moving to the sounds they wanted to hear.

Now, it's the 1980s, and college students are media hungry. They crave *more* than what they can read in a newspaper, *more* than what radio can provide, *more* than what's available on broadcast television. In the 1980s, there is a large demand for television programming directed specifically to college audiences.

The Campus Network was formed in 1984 to meet this demand. Initially, the project provided limited programming (primarily concerts) to video lounges located in student unions at six colleges across the country. However, after exhaustive focus groups and detailed questionnaire research, Campus Network learned that the college community needed something more.

But what was the appropriate mechanism for reaching this audience? The Campus Network soon discovered that a number of colleges and universities operated local cable channels. It was found that the managers of these local cable channels wanted affordable programming to complement their own. And there was endless hours of dead air time to fill, with millions of viewers to reach.

This was the delivery system Campus Network was looking for. In the following months, they created National College Television (NCTV) to develop a progressive lineup of programs, rent satellite transponder space, and sign on affiliates (colleges) in much the same way the television networks sign on their affiliates. NCTV was right on target. Today, one year later, NCTV provides programming to over 110 affiliated campuses, reaching more than 1.4 million students. And it continues to grow.

Chip Nowitzky, director of program services at Campus Network explains why

the market is latching on to NCTV: "in this business, you have to look good if you want to stay on the air. The major networks have spoiled us with slick production values. We take for granted that we'll see incredible graphics. When we see most locally produced shows that have relatively small budgets, we immediately think that they're cheap looking and sloppy. So, we turn them off. NCTV gives the colleges a slick on-air look and great shows that they don't even have to pay for. For us, it's hard . . . and it's expensive . . . but in the long run, it's worth it. We keep signing new affiliates, so we know we're doing something right."

And the affiliates agree. Rubin Abreu, the WUBC-TV station manager at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut says that his staff "loves the look of NCTV."

Staff at the State University of New York (SUNY) in Plattsburgh, said, "the professional look of the programming has really helped our local shows by association."

"It's really helped our viewership, says Joh Sirib, the operations manager for

KSU-TV at Kent State University. "People now see TV-2 as more a professional operation."

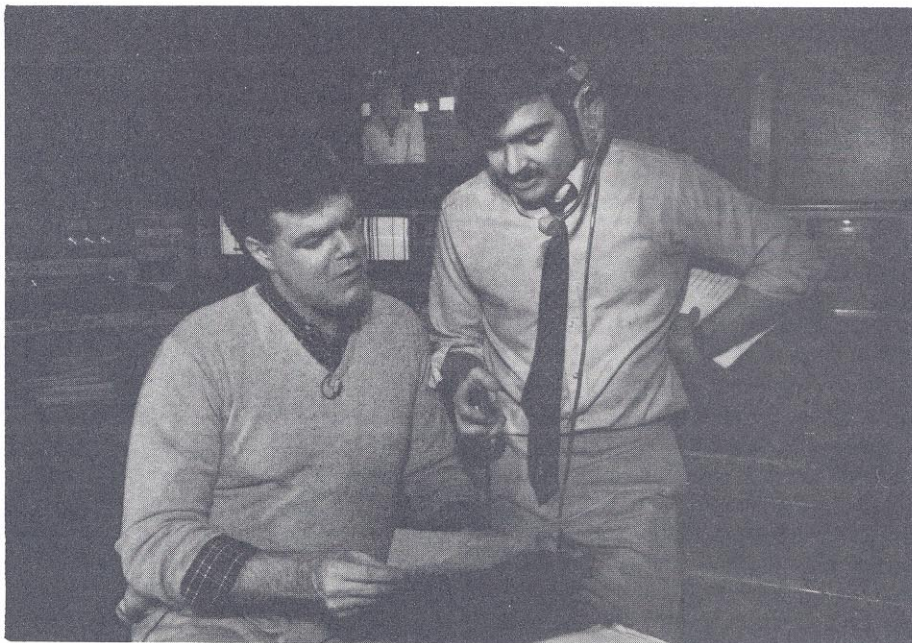
The overall look is critical, but so is the choice of programming. Before NCTV, there was no national entertainment programming for college television stations. To produce a television show that's entertaining and can compete with everything else on TV, plus capture the sophisticated tastes of the college student, takes two things: good programming sense and a high budget.

NCTV gives the college television stations programming that they can't *buy* on their own. As an advertiser supported network, NCTV is given to the affiliates for free.

NCTV's Programming Lineup

NCTV provides an interesting mix of music, comedy, cartoons, vintage drama, news, documentaries and experimental videos.

The cartoons on *The Adult Cartoon Show* are put together for NCTV by the curator of the Museum of Cartoon Art,



Chip Nowitzky (right), director of program services for Campus Network and producer of Campus Network News, consults anchorman Ray White (left). By Karen Petersen.

Chuck Green. And the show has a cult following across the country. Staff at SUNY Fredonia in New York say it's "big time hot!" But will it play in Peoria? Peggy Sassorossi, the director of student activities at Bradley University in Peoria says, "I've walked past the lounge and have seen more than 50 students at a time watching *The Adult Cartoon Show*. Not a bad review. The show has a theme every week and spotlights everyone from Betty Boop to Bugs Bunny.

Audiophilia is a series of hour-long concerts from groups that are just beginning to make it, groups that have broken up, groups on top of the charts and groups that some colleges can't afford to bring in for a live show. There is a diverse artist mix in terms of styles of music. Adam Tom from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology said "I'm glad it's not just mainstream rock 'n roll. We especially like the reggae." And at the University of North Dakota, *Audiophilia* is so popular, they're showing it on a 10' x 14' screen during lunchtime.

Campus Network News is produced by the people at NCTV every week to inform

students about what's happening on campuses across the country. According to Nowitzsky, the executive producer of the show, "we get our stories from the affiliates, the College Press Service and the National On-Campus Report. We report the most important topics of the week. In the fall, we'll be producing a magazine type show. It will be "Entertainment Tonight" meets "60 Minutes," slanted toward the college audience. We'll have crews that go coast to coast. Hopefully, the show will be the eyes and ears of the American college scene."

New Grooves is one of the most popular shows. Hosted by Meg Griffin, it incorporates videos, interviews and music news about bands that don't get much play on programs like MTV. Rubin Abreu from the University of Bridgeport says that *New Grooves* is "everything MTV should be and isn't." At Brigham Young University, the station manager at Cougar Cable, Spence Harden says, "when *New Groove* is on in the Student Union, people come to watch this specifically. It get pretty crowded."

Carefree Comiquickies provides an as-

sortment of nonsense and comic relief that everyone needs.

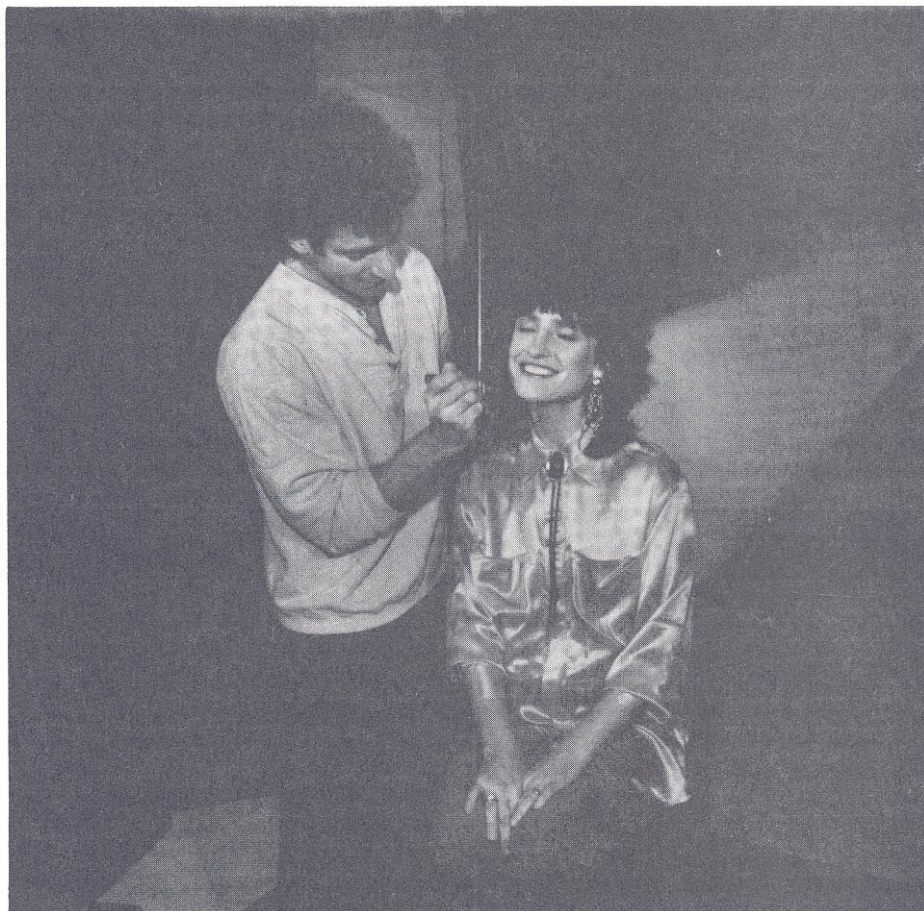
Uncensored is a documentary show that covers some very controversial topics. This past season, *Uncensored* featured programs addressing capital punishment, child abuse, nuclear war, and the struggle of the Haitian boat people.

And for those who crave nostalgia, NCTV has a couple of shows that originally aired in the late 1950s. *Spike Jones* is a wacky slapstick music-comedy show featuring the great innovative showman and his original band, The City Slickers. *The Walter Winchell File* is a series of some of the most dramatic true stories ever to appear on television; the stories are taken from the files of Walter Winchell, who was one of America's leading newspaper columnists.

NCTV Fits Right In

The 20 hours of weekly NCTV programming can be cablecast according to each school's schedule. "The schools with automated capabilities like to run the shows at night, notes Jayne Wolf, director of affiliate relations. "That's when they get their best audiences. The shows fit in with everything they're doing at the stations. What they like most about us is that the network looks great, and what's more, they love us because we're free. The only complaint I hear a lot is that we go off the air during Christmas break and summer vacation." For a network in its infancy, or any network, the response is overwhelming.

The enthusiasm and dedication of the Campus Network staff is what makes it work so well. "If everyone wasn't willing to put in long hours and sometimes live and breathe NCTV, this thing would never have gotten off the ground," says Marilyn Freeman, vice president of marketing. Bradley J. Siegel, executive vice president and general manager, said that "no one here is that far removed from their college days, [no one at Campus Network is over 35], so we have a very good handle on what the market needs. We use a lot of research to determine the types of programming we air, but some of our greatest ideas have come from our gut instincts."



On the set of *New Grooves*, host Meg Griffin gets a touch-up between takes by makeup artist, Robert Pastena. By Karen Petersen.

Andrea Taylor is a free-lance writer in New York City who often writes about media.

PUBLIC POLICY

Experts Discuss High Court's Review Of Preferred Communications

In what promises to be a landmark decision, the U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear *City of Los Angeles v. Preferred Communications Inc.* This case will have profound impact on all aspects of cable regulation, because it is the first time the Supreme Court has accepted a case which examines the relationship between cable television and the First Amendment.

Preferred Communications, Inc. is a cable company (or a would be cable company) that was interested in obtaining a franchise to wire part of the city of Los Angeles. Under the city's franchising procedures, the city requested bids from a number of operators, and chose one of those operators. Preferred Communications refused to participate in the process and sought a franchise independent of the process. When refused, it filed a complaint in federal district court, alleging antitrust and First Amendment violations. The city asked for a dismissal of the case and the district court did so.

However, Preferred Communications appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the Ninth Circuit reversed the lower court on First Amendment grounds. The court ruled that limiting the number of cable operators in a given region was unjustified unless the city could show that there was not enough space on utility poles or in the under-

ground ducts. The Ninth Circuit based its decision on the argument that in this case, utility poles are a "public forum." If utility poles are found to be a public forum, then under the First Amendment, regulation of their use would be restricted to "time, place, and manner" considerations. That is, the city can only facilitate the use of the public rights of way, and cannot block specific parties from using it if they can meet minimum requirements (unless it can be demonstrated that there is no room).

This case is of great importance to all community programmers. It is likely that the decision will either reaffirm local regulations that require local programming, or bring these requirements into question.

The following is a discussion of this case with Sue Miller Buske, executive director of NFLCP; Joe Van Eaton, an attorney with the law firm of Spiegel and McDiarmid; W. Randolph Young, a partner in the law firm of Miller and Young; and Michael Meyerson, a law professor at the University of Baltimore School of Law. They spoke to CTR editor Paul D'Ari. This is the first in a series of roundtable discussions that will be published in CTR.

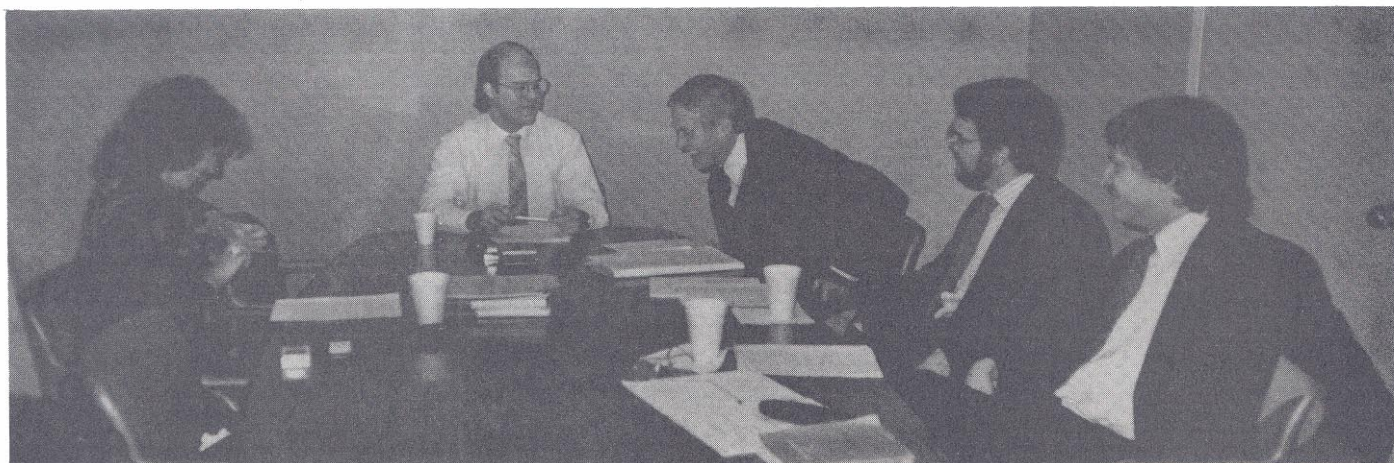
CTR: What is at stake in Preferred? From

a local government's point of view, what can be lost and what can be gained?

Meyerson: What is most important about Preferred is not the ultimate decision, but how it's reached. The way the Supreme Court deals with this issue is important, because that will be the way other courts will have to deal with other cable issues from franchise fees to access. So, it's not merely a decision, but the intellectual process the court takes, and the analogies it draws between broadcasting, newspapers, telephones, billboard, or whatever, are critical.

Preferred Communications may win, but more important than their victory will be exactly what the Court's analysis is, because that's what will carry through for all the other subsequent decisions in the lower courts. This case deals with only one point of regulation. Therefore, how the rest of the universe of cable regulation is affected is entirely dependent on the analysis, as opposed to the decision.

Van Eaton: I agree with Michael. To put it another way, I think if Los Angeles were to win before the Supreme Court, that would be an incredible defeat for the cable industry. If you try to figure out the basis for which the Supreme Court would decide in favor of Los Angeles, given the



From left to right: Sue Miller Buske, executive director of NFLCP; Paul D'Ari, editor of CTR; W. Randolph Young, a partner at the law firm of Miller and Young; Joe Van Eaton, an attorney with the law firm of Spiegel and McDiarmid; and Michael Meyerson, a law professor at the University of Baltimore School of Law.

factual circumstances, I think basically they'd be deciding that utility poles are not a public forum, and as long as they are reasonable, the city has some reasonable basis for eliminating entry. I think that would have implications also for franchise enforcement. If you take the next step and say, what if Los Angeles loses, then you have to ask yourself, how does the Supreme Court get that judgment? Is it really such a bad decision for the cities if the Supreme Court were to say: "well, assuming there is no economic scarcity, and assuming there's no physical scarcity—then you would have to let anyone who was willing to meet public service obligations, on to the poles."

Meyerson: Or even more narrowly, the court may say you have to maximize the number of speakers. That could mean that if there's room for two, you must choose two. However, how you choose two is up to you. So, it could simply be a question of, does the First Amendment require government to maximize the number of speakers. If so, this would shake out exclusive franchises, but not any other form of local regulation.

Van Eaton: Yes, that's right. And the next question would be how far would government have to go to find, because of economic scarcity, it's better not to have multiple franchises? The answer may be, you can impose other forms of regulations in lieu of multiple franchises.

Young: There is a lot at stake in *Preferred*. In the worst of all possible worlds, if the rationale the Ninth Circuit's decision is accepted, local governments will be limited to "time, place and manner" type of regulations. That is, they will be able to impose regulations on how high cable can be strung above the streets; they can impose restrictions on digging up the public rights-of-way; and they can have other technical regulations. However, any other requirements would be considered burdensome. Although the Ninth Circuit did not directly address the constitutional validity of the Cable Communications Pol-

icy Act, the decision did seem to cast some doubt on its validity, and if you take the court's rationale—that the public right of ways are in essence a public forum—then almost every provision of the Act will be questionable.

Buske: Isn't it fascinating, though, that the court did not take a look at the fact that there can only be X amount of coaxial wires hanging on the poles or buried in the conduits, which automatically limits the number of players?

CTR: Yes, isn't physical scarcity an important argument that justifies limiting the number of players?

Young: One of the arguments that was before the courts was trying to draw a parallel with the federal government's regulation of the radio spectrum, which the Supreme Court upheld in the *NBC* case. This determination allows a fair amount of content-related regulation by the FCC. The rationale in *NBC* was that the radio spectrum is limited, and therefore, the government has an important role to play in allocating the use of that spectrum, and who can use it. No one has a First Amendment right to hold a broadcast license. This provides a very strong parallel to cable regulation. Unfortunately, the Ninth Circuit summarily rejected this by saying that it isn't appropriate—the radio spectrum isn't at issue, these are cables. The D.C. Circuit has also rejected similar arguments.

However, I think there is a lot of validity in this parallel. The government has an interest in regulating the use of the radio spectrum, because it is a limited public resource, and public rights of way are similarly a limited public resource. It's not important how many cables or how many radio broadcasters you can physically accommodate. It's that there is a limited public resource. Unfortunately, the circuit courts have pretty much rejected this argument thus far (except for the Tenth Circuit in *Boulder II*).

Meyerson: In *Preferred*, the Ninth Circuit was limited to the question of an exclusive franchise. They did not say everyone could get in on it. The question they posed to themselves was, if you could have more than one, can you limit yourself to one? Which does not mean what if there were seven applicants and room for two. They deliberately avoided that and I think intellectually the ultimate Supreme Court decision has to address that inevitability.

I wonder whether there isn't a misunderstanding about the management of the radio spectrum. The radio spectrum has not been managed in a way that maximizes the number of speakers. If that were so, you would have quite a different allocation than you actually have. The same is true of utility poles. One can imagine putting up an incredibly large pole that could handle more than enough cable systems, but the question is whether that should be a requirement. Should a city have to keep replacing all of its poles, or should the utilities have to keep replacing all of their poles to allow however many operators want to get in?

CTR: What about the practical realities of overbuilding. Do you think the evidence of economic and physical scarcity are compelling enough to convince the court that cable is a natural monopoly?

Buske: It seems to me that the facts speak for themselves. Overbuilds are not very hot; they do not make good business sense. You don't see cable companies jumping at the opportunity when they have a chance to overbuild in most cases. The industry is saying the numbers don't work. The court must look at the long history of failure in overbuilding, when they consider this case. When they look at the evidence, I believe it will be extremely difficult for them to conclude that cable is *not* a natural monopoly.

Van Eaton: The question that goes through my mind, is what does a city have to show before it can rely on economic scarcity as a basis for a decision? Do they have to pull in 40 different experts and

listen to expert testimony as to whether cable is economically scarce, or can they rely on general information available. Can a city council rely on common sense information and knowledge without going out and putting on an antitrust type trial, before making a decision?

Meyerson: In every case in which a court or a jury has looked at this issue from a factual basis, they have found cable to be a natural monopoly. Therefore, in a case like *Preferred*, in which the city says we're regulating because we know cable is a natural monopoly, they can argue persuasively that we do not have to reinvent the wheel. We do not have to haul in 40 antitrust experts and spend a fortune to prove what we already know. From the theories of Judge Posner, to the practical rulings of juries and judges throughout the country, we know that cable is a natural monopoly.

It can also be argued that the Cable Act requires universal service. This is something the Ninth Circuit did not look at, but I think the Supreme Court will have to address this. I believe that wiring both poor and rich areas is a compelling governmental interest. It is necessary to ensure that there is no economic discrimination. And this will be a difficult requirement to satisfy if we allow overbuilding.

Young: There is another argument that I feel is relevant here, and that is the *O'Brien* Test. In the *O'Brien* case, an individual burned a draft card and said that was his right under the First Amendment. However, the Supreme Court ruled that burning a draft card is not one's right under the First Amendment, and the court issued a four point test. Without getting into all the details, suffice it to say that the court ruled that it is reasonable to impose incidental restrictions on free speech if there is some other legitimate governmental interest in doing so, unrelated to the restriction of free speech. Under *O'Brien*, one can easily argue that it is reasonable for local governments to impose a fran-

chising system that limits the number of franchises.

CTR: Are you concerned about the impact *Preferred* may have on community programming?

Buske: Yes. If you take a look at the way the cable industry has portrayed other decisions, related to their First Amendment rights, which they have supposedly won, and if you look at the way they have sold these decisions to local governments, I am very concerned. They will try to get everything they can out of this decision. If they can find an angle, if they can find two sentences, four words, in that decision, they are going to try to carry that over to access. But it's going to be difficult for them, particularly if they win it on the grounds that the number of speakers must be maximized. If local governments are going to be constrained in limiting the number of operators, it may be difficult for operators to justify limiting the public's access to cable systems.

Meyerson: This is a cause for real concern. The judiciary has tremendous difficulty understanding the technology of cable. For example, the Supreme Court called the cable news network pay cable, and the D.C. Circuit has said that because you can have a lot of channels there's no monopoly power; they ignored the fact that one person is controlling all the channels. The courts do not understand cable, and their decisions tend to reflect the lack of understanding. I am concerned that they are going to try putting the left foot on the right shoe, and write a decision that has no real bearing on the technology, the possibilities, the individualized nature of cable. I think the biggest danger for access is that the decision could be painted with a very broad brush.

Van Eaton: I guess I see a more practical danger for access. Whether it is painted with a broad brush or a narrow brush, the question is, who is going to take access to the Supreme Court? Who is going to fight

for access? Will the city that is faced with a lawsuit, put its resources into defending access? I think it will be a city, and not an access corporation, who will be sued. Therefore, I think we have a problem in ensuring that access questions will be resolved before the court.

Young: I think that the most serious potential problem is how the Supreme Court analyzes this case. If they start comparing cable to broadcasting and determine that because it doesn't use the radio spectrum, it's like a newspaper, it will be a tremendous problem. The courts have struck down all kinds of content regulations for newspapers. In *Tornillo*, the Supreme Court struck down a Florida statute several years ago that required newspapers to provide access to political candidates who wanted to purchase space in the newspaper to have their views publicized. The court said you have no right of access to a newspaper, even if it's the only newspaper in town. If the newspaper model is applied to cable, access is in big trouble.

Meyerson: I'd like to offer one more thought on the question of whether utility poles are a public forum. Not too many years ago, the same court (the Ninth Circuit) ruled that public utility poles were a public forum, not for cable but for billboards and campaign posters. They said this is for the public; the public can own it; the public can use these free poles to put up their campaign posters. Shortly thereafter the Supreme Court reversed the Ninth Circuit, and ruled that utility poles are not a public forum. So, in *Preferred*, we have the Ninth Circuit saying in essence, that yes, we know you (the Supreme Court) told us utility poles are not a public forum, but gosh they look a lot like it.

This is the weakest part of the Ninth Circuit's decision. If I had to put money on why the Supreme Court took the case, I would bet that it was just to tell the Ninth Circuit: "hey guys, we told you once, we'll tell you twice—utility poles are not a public forum."

TECHNOLOGY

THE COMMUNITY VIDEOT: A Resource of Technical Tips

By Dave Bloch

Before we get started, let me remind you that this column is always open to your questions, suggestions, and great ideas. Send them to:

Dave Bloch
Davis Community Cable
1605 2nd Street
Davis, CA 95616
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Live Remote Cablecasts

I don't know of any kind of access programming that is as exciting for the producer, crew and viewer, than a live remote. Sports events, public meetings, performances, or anything else, takes on a new importance when it is televised live. It also offers a real challenge for even a seasoned access production team.

Unfortunately, few access operations are blessed with microwave transmission equipment, and many cable television operators have never activated their promised institutional networks or two-way subscriber networks. As a result, there is no transmission medium available in these systems to send signals from remote locations to the headend.

This article will offer two simple "upstream" transmission systems that might be of use to you. We have used both of these in the cable system in Davis, CA.

Linking Up With Ma Bell

A staple of many access operations is city council meetings, usually taped and played back a day or two later. After the mayor of Davis suggested that live audio might be more useful than taped video, we developed a very simple system for carrying live audio from our city council chambers. It requires very little staff time to put it in operation, and it costs less than \$20 for equipment. It does require someone who knows a little bit about electronics, like how to solder. Here's how to do it:

1. Scrounge a broken telephone answering machine. Open it carefully. Locate the cord or plug that usually connects the machine to the telephone company outlet in a wall. Follow the wires from the cord or plug—one of them should go to a small transformer.

2. Note which side of the transformer the wire goes to. Unsolder the transformer from the answering machine, and mount it on a small piece of phenolic "breadboard" (available at any electronics store). To the "phone wire" side, solder a piece of telephone wire with a common telephone modular plug on the end (feel free to use the cord that was originally on the answering machine, if it had one). To the other side, solder a piece of shielded audio cable. Put the whole thing in a small box with the cables passing through holes to the outside; give it a high-tech name like "Telephone Transmission Interface (TTI)," and take it to city hall.
3. Look in the back of the council chambers' public address (PA) system. Somewhere, there should be a connection labelled, "tape output" or "line output," or something similar. It could be a jack or just screw terminals. Solder the appropriate plug or screw lugs to the end of the TTI's audio cable, and connect it to the PA system.
4. Locate a telephone outlet near the PA system. The city may have to have one installed, but most council meeting rooms have a live telephone somewhere. (Anyway, if you have gotten

this far, someone in city government must be excited enough about the project to help.) Purchase a telephone Y-connector or install a dual telephone plug, so that both a phone and your TTI can be plugged in simultaneously.

5. Meanwhile, at the headend, you will need a telephone line, a telephone, and a Radio Shack telephone/recorder interface (see *CTR*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1985, page 27). Plug the interface into the wall jack, the phone into the interface, and run a piece of audio cable from the interface audio output to the input of the cable TV modulator. That's it!
6. To use the system, arrange for someone at city hall to call you at the head-end phone before each council meeting. Have a TV nearby. When you pick up the phone, you should be able to hear both of your voices coming through on the access channel. Now, have the caller plug the interface into the Y-connector or dual wall jack. PA system audio should now be audible. The caller can now hang up. You should unplug your telephone receiver from the phone, but **DON'T HANG IT UP!** Adjust the audio level at the modulator, go home, and wait for the cards and letters.

Continues on page 37

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GOVERNMENT ACCESS CORNER

Government Access Profiles

By Andy Beecher

As was evident in the last issue of the *Community Television Review*, local government programming operations have proliferated in recent years. An increasing number of city and county governments are recognizing the value of developing government access in their communities. This can be largely attributed to the commitments that were made to local programming during the franchising years (the current franchise renewal processes have contributed to this trend as well). In addition, the networking efforts of the NFLCP and the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) and gradual osmosis from one city to another, have stimulated a great deal of interest in government access. The visible success of C-SPAN has also had an effect.

I have been contributing a regular column on government access for the past five issues. As you can see, in this issue we have given it a name: "Government Access Corner." I will continue to profile numerous government access centers and discuss issues that are of importance to government access programmers. In this issue we will visit two government access centers: City 16 in Norman, OK and CVTV in Vancouver, WA.

Norman, OK

Norman is a major city in Oklahoma. It is the home of the University of Oklahoma, and is located just south of Oklahoma City, near the center of the state.

The city of Norman operates "City 16" within the CATV Division of the City Manager's Office. City 16's staff includes three full-time and ten part-time employees. The division's director, Roxanne Snell, acts primarily as the administrator of the cable franchise, but also assists with programming by moderating talk shows, conducting research for some shows, and providing technical assistance. The CATV production coordinator directs most of the programs, coordinating crews and facilities. The CATV programming manager, a newly-created position, assists with these productions, and also coordinates

the development of public, educational, and government access (more on this below). Ten part-time employees are each paid \$4.00 per hour as production assistants for City 16's programs.

The operation is funded by the cable franchise fee, which is earmarked in the following manner: 40% of this revenue goes to the city's general fund, and is used to reimburse the city for its staff assistance in the administration of the cable franchise (engineering, clerical support, etc.); 60% goes to the CATV Division for regulation and community programming.

Recently, the cable commission determined that the city should be doing more to support public and educational access. The City's channel had been growing steadily, but public access, operated by the cable company, had not fared as well. Therefore, the City adopted a commission recommendation to hire a CATV programming manager who:

- promotes public, educational, and government (PEG) access;
- conducts PEG audience measurement surveys annually;
- supplements the cable operator's access training program by conducting community seminars on scripting, lighting, editing;
- designs and implement an access brochure;
- provides staff support to "CAN" (Community Access: Norman), a video festival;
- organizes statewide conferences on local cable programming;
- develops a local community producers' organization;
- assists individuals and groups in finding grants for their proposed programs;
- provides technical advice to community groups; and
- assists in government access productions.

In creating this position, the cable commission feels that it is performing one of its most valuable roles: to promote the use of public access channels.

City 16 also continues its exemplary

development of government access programming. Roxanne Snell indicates that the growth of the channel has been gradual and deliberate. She and production coordinator David Bland "have a vision of the service that we can provide to the City . . . We're not having to knock on the City departments' doors anymore . . . A slow, steady recognition of the value of the channel has developed, both in City Hall and in the community."

Currently, City 16 uses a studio at a high school and other equipment available from local resources. It is Roxanne's hope to develop an independent city production facility.

Some of the programs produced by City 16 include:

- City council and planning commission meetings.
- "The Public's Business"—an issues-oriented series featuring the City Manager speaking with two members of the local press/media, and hosted by the CATV Division Director.
- "Norman 2000"—a series focusing on the concepts held by community leaders regarding Norman's future; hosted by an assistant to the City Manager.
- "City Sampler"—Interviews with City department personnel about the programs and services they provide.
- Candidates' Forums—with the League of Women Voters.
- "Babysitters' Workshop"—A special, produced with the Police Department and the Public Library.

Persons interested in these programs, or having questions about City 16 and the City of Norman's roles in community programming, should call Roxanne Snell at (405) 321-1600.

Vancouver, Washington

Vancouver is a city situated directly across the Columbia River from Portland, OR. In contrast to the serene, "quiet" side of Mt. St. Helens, which it faces, Vancouver is rumbling with community programming activity. Cox Cable operates a very successful local origination facility; the City-County Cable Commission and

Cox have joined forces to establish a new public access center; and Clark-Vancouver Television (CVTV) is one of the most rapidly growing government access operations in the country.

Jeff Peel, CVTV's program manager, said "... people *are* participating more in local government because of this channel. . . . Citizens who speak at public hearings have told the city that they would never have appeared before a public body had they not seen announcements and other people participating on the channel."

Peel stresses the importance of producing quality programs. "We should fool people into thinking it's broadcast television. . . . You don't need 'full-blown' broadcast equipment to turn out good looking programs. . . . Do great intro's to get people hooked, and then produce your meeting coverage with as much lighting as your city council will tolerate. . . . The product should look as good as you can make it. . . . The viewing audience is accustomed to broadcast quality. . . . Not necessarily that the programs should *resemble* broadcast, but the pictures should be clean and the color good. Also, use your character generator, and a lot of text to add information to the meetings. This makes it easier for the 'channel flippers' to know what's going on."

CVTV has its own facilities in city hall for council meetings and remote productions. The Council Chamber is wired with two remote control cameras, and a third camera is tripod-mounted in a production booth (which is equipped with switching and editing equipment). Council meetings are covered by two people, one functioning as director and operator of the cameras, and one who operates audio and character generation. Portable production is done with "mini-mobile" equipment, including two Ikegami 730A cameras. Playback is automated, with a Phasecom Director machine.

Joining Jeff Peel on CVTV's staff are production assistant Sandy Hubbard, and a full time secretary. Cable administrator Donna Mason oversees the operation and moderates several programs, but she primarily administers the cable franchise. CVTV's budget comes from the general funds of Clark County and the city of Vancouver. Programming produced by CVTV includes:

- city council, cable commission, planning commission, Chamber of Commerce Forums, and other meetings;
- "City Minutes," an issues program, hosted by the Cable Administrator;

- "Dateline," an in-depth public affairs program produced monthly in "ENG" style; and
- numerous public service announcements.

For more information on CVTV, call Jeff Peel or Donna Mason at (206) 696-8235.

Andy Beecher is programming director at the Metropolitan Area Communications Commission in Beaverton, OR. He writes "Government Access Corner" in every issue of the Community Television Review.

Classified Ads

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The University of Tampa Humanities Division is now recruiting for an Assistant Professor in Telecommunications. Responsibilities include teaching video at the introductory, intermediate and advanced levels. The university campus is the location for the Public Access Studios of Tampa Cable Television and the origination point for Educational Access TV. The production emphases are community programming and individual expression. Knowledge of information theory and interactive technology a benefit. Ph.D.-A.B.D. preferred. Salary: \$24,000. Send resume and three references to:

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Public access television in Grand Rapids, MI will be hiring for these two full-time positions. For a job description, contact:

GRTV
50 Liberty Plaza
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Technical Tips

Continued from page 35

That Unusable I-NET

Many new cable systems were built with "shadow" institutional networks. That is, I-Net cables were installed around the city with no amplifiers or headend equipment to make them work. Cable operators have delayed activation of these networks until some measure of profitability is assured. Full, two-way activation of an I-Net is a very expensive project which few cable systems have been able to afford.

If you have a particular location in your community that would be very valuable as a remote origination site, and that site is accessible to the I-Net, it may be possible to partially activate the network to carry your programs upstream at a minimal cost to the cable operator. This can be accomplished by using small one-way amplifiers called "line extenders," which many cable systems keep on hand for new installations. Although not appropriate for handling broadband data communication, the line extenders will do an excellent job of amplifying low-band signals (TV channels 3 or 4).

In Davis, we installed several of these one-way amplifiers backward on our I-Net between the headend and a local theater. For live cablecasts, a Radio Shack RF Modulator converts our audio and video to a channel 4 TV signal which is connected directly to one end of the I-Net (the RF modulator on a VCR will work, too). At the headend, we demodulate the signal (using the tuner on a home VCR, although a real demodulator would be better), insert character-generated and taped material when needed, and send the program out on the local channel. The quality of the feed is excellent, public relations value is great, and the whole activation project required total out-of-pocket expenses to the cable operator of about \$25.00 (the amplifiers were spares, gathering dust in the warehouse).

Both of these live remote cablecast systems are actually in use in the Davis Community Cable service area. If you would like more details on how we use either of them, please feel free to contact me.

Have fun!

Dave Bloch is Manager of Local Programming for the Davis Cable Cooperative. "The Community Videot" is his regular column, and is published in every issue of CTR.

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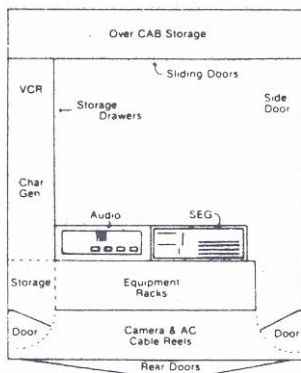
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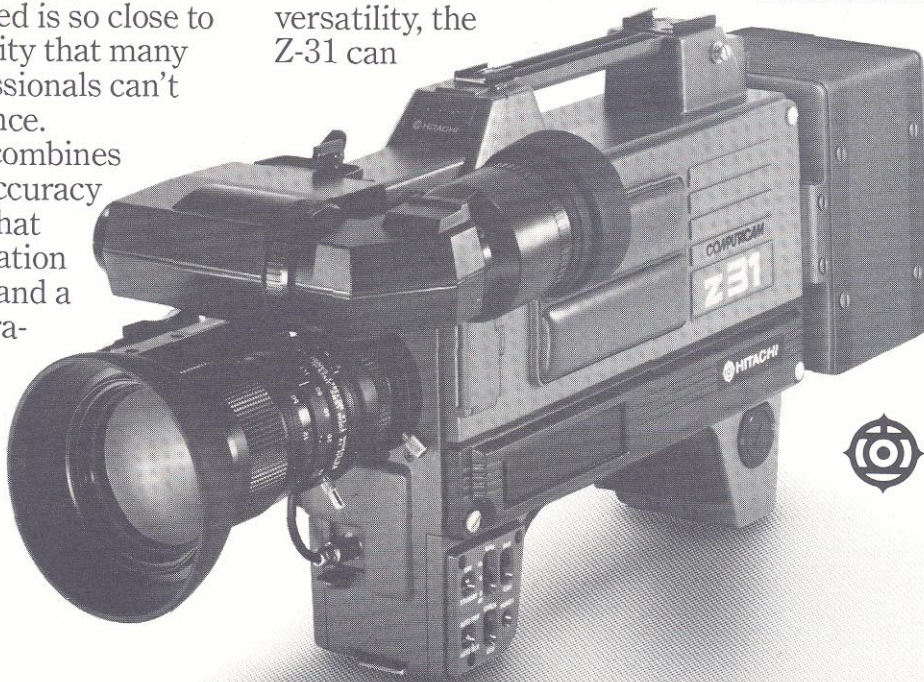
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